



Southfields Grid
RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

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GRID NEWS

Summer 2024

Delivered free to every home and business in Southfields Grid

TA-TA, TATTUM! VICAR IAN RETIRES FROM ST BARNABAS

There will be sadness in the pews of St Barnabas Church in early autumn as the Rev Ian Tattum takes his last services before retirement. The popular Vicar, who turned his church into a community hub for a substantial number of local organisations, leaves Southfields on then Sunday 8th September for retirement in Dorset with wife Ruth after 18 years in the role.

Ian arrived at St Barnabas in 2006 from a rural parish with three churches, and was previously a curate in Beaconsfield. What attracted him to SW18? "I thought it would be interesting to leave rural ministry and experience the church in the city" he told Grid News. "I specifically came to St Barnabas because it was in the liberal Catholic tradition, which is where I feel I belong, and the people I met here were very open and hospitable."

An immediate concern was the state of the church buildings. Ian saw through a new building project on the church site and the opening of additional new halls in 2010. "Having had a lot of experience of building projects in medieval country churches I found the challenge of building new halls and restoring the church a compelling one" he remembers. A lifelong interest in nature, ecology and protection of the environment meant he was responsible for making the garden space more environmentally friendly.

Ian focussed on the church becoming a 'community hub,' forging links with local schools, welcoming orchestras, theatre groups, art projects and music ensembles. More recently Choral Compline has been introduced on the last Sunday evening of each month. He's been proud of all this. "Working with people to open the church and halls up to the community so it can provide a space for worship and a place to meet, have celebrations, discuss local issues, share music and the creative arts, has been wonderful."

Ian was Chaplain to the Mayor of Wandsworth, then stood as a candidate for local elections. He became chair of the SGRA in 2013, and supported the formation of the Friends of Wimbledon Park and our Business Forum.

Many other posts followed – a Governor of Riversdale Primary School then chair, part of the Wandsworth Community Empowerment Network, Director of the Nicholas Stewart Project which works with vulnerable young people, a member of the Independent Advisory Committee to the Metropolitan Police, and recently co-chair of the Wandsworth Cost of Living Commission.



REV IAN TATTUM

He encouraged the use of the church space by community-based groups for events like 'Southfields Harvest' and 'Mend, Fix and Repair Cafe' as well as being the venue for election hustings and society AGMs. Another initiative was to turn the church into a venue for a homeless shelter in the winter months run by Glass Door, a national charity providing shelter for 30 men and women one night a week. During the Covid lockdown Ian joined in the local 'Grid Alliance' initiative to provide support for the local community, and welcomed the use of St Barnabas as the Southfields vaccination centre.

Ian's services to the community have been officially recognised. In June 2016 he was awarded a Mayor's Pin on the Roll of Honour for services to the mayoralty. He was the

recipient of a Wandsworth Civic Award in October 2023.

Rev Joy Boyce, long part of the team at St Barnabas, and the Chaplain of Whitelands College in Roehampton Rev Dr Daniel Eshun, will lead a team of local clergy and lay members to ensure that services are conducted and business continues.

The congregation have been quick to offer their personal tributes. Former churchwarden Margaret Brett has known Ian during his whole tenure as Vicar. "Ian's vision has been to put St Barnabas at the centre of the community. His friendly, approachable, welcoming nature has made him supportive of innovative ideas and initiatives. We will miss his wisdom and kindness." Parishioner Bella Park adds "Ian has been the most amazing priest. Nobody will ever forget his sermons, a unique combination of religion, erudition, nature notes and audience (sorry, congregation!) participation."

Known for his fondness for poetry and birds, he's a published author of poems and articles on nature and his individual historical research. Ian hopes to have more time to devote to all this in retirement in Dorset. "I'm looking forward to spending more time with Ruth and my family. To getting more involved in nature conservation and doing more writing on some of the subjects that really interest me."

Highlights? "Interviewing Tracy Chevalier during one of our arts festivals, being Chair of Governors at Riversdale School, being asked to co-chair the Cost of Living Commission – those are three, as well as being Chaplain to three Mayors of Wandsworth." His most important moments though have been as a simple parish priest. "Most of the things I value most have been pastoral. Conversations and time spent with people dealing with bereavement, or preparing for baptism or confirmation. Those are the most special."

A farewell party on Saturday 7th September is being planned. If you would like to attend, please email the church office stbarnabassouthfieldsoffice@gmail.com for more details.

EDITOR'S LETTER



Charles Runcie, SGRA Chair

Welcome to the summer issue of Grid News, and thanks for some of the nice comments about our newsletter. We honestly try to reflect all that happens around the Grid, spotlighting some of the people who make it such a wonderful place. If we're missing something, let us know.

Summer for the SGRA means one thing - time to get in your new and renewed annual subs! Although we currently have a good bank balance, with around £5,000 in the bank we need these subs to pay for the things we do during our year - grants, hall hires, catering, printing, websites etc. We have NO council subsidy, so every penny counts, and we appreciate your continued support. See the envelope that came with Grid News for details of how to join or renew. Minimum donation is £5, but remember you can give more, and many people have been kind enough to do so.

Have you recovered from the Wimbledon tennis fortnight? There's one more big match to come for the All England Club, this time off the courts, and we have news of that on this page.

We've also got plenty on coffee shops - I could do a whole issue of Grid News on them all! I know plenty of people will be glad in particular to see the cafe in Wimbledon Park back open. Frankly, it was closed for far too long.

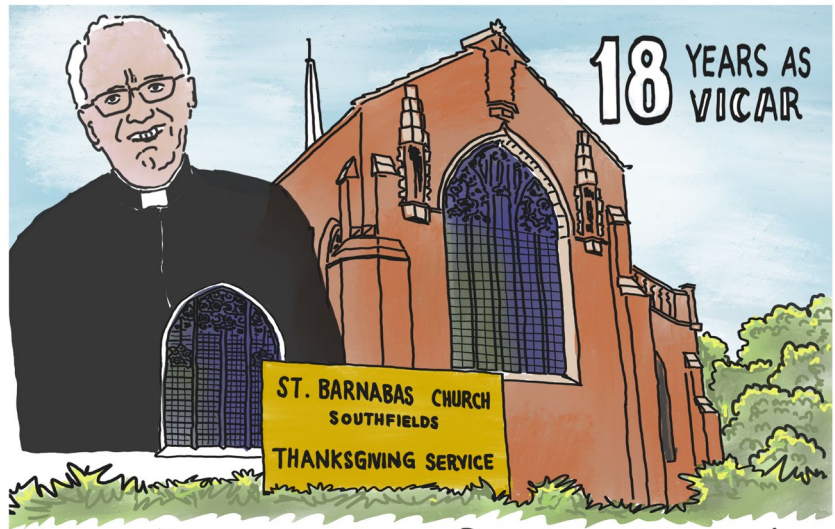
We're also introducing something new to Grid News, two pages of news and information to appeal to the many young families living in the Grid. It was a recent suggestion, and we hope everyone enjoys the new addition.

Following the success of our General Election hustings, the next SGRA public meeting will be at St Barnabas church on Tuesday 23rd July starting at 7.45pm. It would be lovely to see you there.

Enjoy your summer holidays, whether at home or abroad, or even here in the Grid! Don't hesitate to get in touch with a story or a comment if you feel the SGRA can help out.

Best wishes

Charles



Happy Retirement to Rev. Ian Tattum!

CARTOON BY GERARD (GERARD.SEBASTIAN@GMAIL.COM)

AELTC DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE

By Simon Wright

The 'Save Wimbledon Park' group met the GLA's planning team on 27th June. They confirmed there will be no hearing at City Hall in July or August, so cannot now be before September. 21 days' notice of the hearing will be given, and all the information will be put on www.savewimbledonpark.org

Between now and September we want to boost the numbers on our www.change.org petition. When it gets to 25,000 signatures it can be taken to City Hall and handed in.

- Even if you have signed it already please ask your friends and relatives to do so. The GLA planning website remains open for submissions:



- You are welcome to make your comments via the app, but only do so if you have a new point to make.

It is not a referendum - the final decision will not be swayed by volume of submissions either way but by strength of the argument

Please email me at simon@ofplus.com if you wish to know more about any of the above

BEWARE, A PARCEL THIEF'S ABOUT

By Kyra von Schottenstein - street rep

With the increase in home deliveries, many packages left outside people's front doors have become vulnerable to theft. We have had numerous reports and sightings of thieves roaming the area and helping themselves to unattended packages. As a deterrent to stop such behaviour can we please recommend that if you order something online, you take a number of steps to ensure that this does not happen to you.

Firstly, there are a number of places that will receive your online orders. You can collect your items at your convenience. To name a few locations:

- Amazon orders can be delivered to 'The Locker' at Southfields Gym, or Krystals

convenience Store in Southfields.

- John Lewis orders can be delivered and collected from Waitrose in Wimbledon.

- M&S orders can be collected from our local shop on Wimbledon Park Road.

- You can also collect online deliveries from the Post Office on Replingham Road.

Secondly, can we suggest that should you see a stray package in front of your neighbour's door, please pick it up, take it home and put a note through their letterbox to say you have retrieved it for safekeeping.

Hopefully these few measures will cut the number of package thefts the Grid has experienced.

kyralaertis@gmail.com

OBITUARY: MIKE CASWELL, FORMER SGRA CHAIR

Mike Caswell MBE, a well-known member of the Southfields Grid community for over 50 years and who chaired the Southfields Grid Residents' Association (SGRA) for many years, died on Tuesday 21st May in St George's Hospital. He was 91.

Mike was born Michael Joseph Henry Caswell in Dorset on 23rd September 1932 and had been married to Valerie for 64 years. He came to Wandsworth in 1970 with his wife and two children when appointed Administration Officer at HM Prison Wandsworth, then later worked for over 25 years as a Higher Executive Officer in the House of Commons. Mike was awarded the MBE in the 1997 New Year Honours List.

He was also known for being a great footballer and cricketer. Before he moved to London he played for both Portland United Football Club and Portland Red Triangle Cricket Club. After he moved to Wandsworth Mike played football and cricket at Wandgas for over 30 years.

After being a member of SGRA since the 1980s, Mike became Chair in 1996. He continued to be its driving force until May 2011, when he finally stood down aged 79.

Mike always had a ready listening ear, and a capacity for ensuring things got done. His easy-going manner made him very approachable, and he was a familiar figure active around Southfields, always with time for a chat. Apart from pursuing the day-to-day



MIKE CASWELL

issues such as paving and parking, he ensured events were organised such as the annual SGRA carol singing event at the tube station which raised funds for local charities, the annual SGRA tea party for older residents, and the introduction of the then hugely popular, annual street softball competition. He gave the SGRA's active support to forming the Southfields Business Forum.

After Mike stepped down from SGRA in 2011 our then MP Justine Greening paid this tribute: "The local community owe a huge debt of

gratitude to Mike for all his hard work. Over the years he has done a fantastic job bringing together local people, helping them shape their community. I am immensely proud to know Mike through this role, and I am sure he will continue to be a power for good locally for many years to come."

In a Grid News article in 2022 he reflected on those early days of the SGRA. "It had been formed in 1975 to fight the then council's policy of buying up empty homes on the Grid", he recalled. "Many residents thought it was with a view to an eventual mass demolition and replacement of the Grid with a series of tower blocks. Once that threat had receded the SGRA started to find its feet."

Mike's funeral was held at St Barnabas Church, on Wednesday 12th June at 11.30am. A collection has been organised to raise money for a plaque on a memorial bench in Coronation Gardens. If you'd like to contribute please donate by bank transfer to the following:

Southfields Grid Residents' Association

Account: 83500020

Sort Code: 20-90-69

Please put 'CASWELL' in the reference box

If you'd like to read more of Mike's early memories of the SGRA, visit www.southfieldsgrid.org.uk/about/grid-news and search for the Winter 2022 issue, page 11.

HUSTINGS A USEFUL DEBATE FOR LOCAL VOTERS

Nearly 200 local residents – and a few from further afield – crammed into St Barnabas church on Monday 17th June for a General Election hustings organised by the SGRA. The event, one of many the SGRA have organised in the past decade at every election time, brought together 6 of the 7 candidates standing in our local constituency to be our MP.



A PACKED HUSTINGS AUDIENCE

Conservative, Green, Labour, LibDem, Reform and Workers Party candidates all took to the stage to introduce themselves and outline their policies. They then answered in turn a total of 9 questions on both local and national issues submitted by email beforehand and on the night itself. The only absentee was the Rejoin EU candidate who was unwell, but another of their candidates from Peckham took his place to deliver a statement about their party's policies.

Two hours debate passed quickly, and over refreshments afterwards participants and audience alike felt it had been an informative and productive evening. One candidate wrote to say "Thanks again for great organising and hosting. Was nice to catch up, and to answer local residents' questions," while an audience member added "Well done on the hustings. It's a tricky job managing every speaker and the timings, plus some controversial issues. I thought it was a really useful event."

The candidates attended many other hustings events, notably in Putney and Roehampton.



FLEUR ANDERSON MAKES A POINT

In the General Election on 4th July Fleur Anderson retained her seat, increasing her vote share to 49% up by 4.7 percentage points, and now has a five-figure majority.

GRID NEWS FAMILY PAGES



Welcome to the first Grid Families pages! With Southfields renowned as being so family-friendly, we thought a dedicated section to little Southfielders and their parents was overdue. We would love your feedback, and any ideas for future editions. Make sure to also follow our Instagram page, @southfieldsgrid where upcoming events (for all ages!) are often posted.

Kate Shattock

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RETURNING TO EXERCISE POSTPARTUM – FIND JOY IN THE JOURNEY!

As a Specialist Pre & Postnatal PT and mum of two young children, I understand the challenges and importance of returning to exercise postpartum, as well as the desire to reconnect with yourself. Finding the motivation and time for postpartum recovery can be tough, but investing in yourself is always worth it. My goal is to help mums feel empowered, strong, and confident in their new bodies.

Motherhood brings significant changes, and laying the foundations for a solid recovery is crucial. Rebuilding our cores, pelvic floors, and overall strength opens-up opportunities for a healthier, more active life. But just as important, choose activities you enjoy! As mums with limited time, it's essential to find joy in your fitness journey. If you enjoy it, you'll stick with it, and that will make a big difference in helping you feel like yourself again!

If you'd like to chat more about the challenges, the journey and the joy, feel free to email me on thea@thfitness.co.uk or follow @coach_thea_hudson



LITTLE EXPLORERS

Little Explorers Society is a fantastic new baby music adventure set up by two Southfields mums. Our sensory classes are fun, fresh and stimulating, with a very friendly and 'local' feel.

Classes are run in four-week blocks, with little ones getting to immerse themselves in a new environment each week - from under the sea to outer space!

Our adventures take place on Thursdays at Brathway Hall, Brathway Road. The 'Globetrotter ticket' gives access to four classes for £49. Little Explorers are also running 'single trip tickets' for the summer for £13 each.

Find out more at www.littleexplorerssociety.co.uk or follow @littleexplorerssociety



HAPPY FEET

Hi, I'm Sam and I've helped take care of little feet in Southfields since 2015. It all started when my eldest took her first steps - feeling excited, off we went to the shoe shop, expecting the fitter to answer my questions and that I would leave feeling happy she was wearing the right shoes, sadly neither was true. The experience didn't make me feel like a good mum.

Several frustrating shopping trips and many conversations with other parents later, I couldn't shake the idea of creating the shoe shopping experience for which I had hoped. After training as a shoe fitter and working on an idea to make buying shoes for little ones easier, more personal and relaxed, CeCe & Me became a reality.

The Southfields community has been wonderfully supportive, and I'm so proud to know I've helped so many parents make healthy choices for their children's feet.

I'd love to help you too! I work by appointment from home on Elborough Street, or can come to you for a small charge. I stock a range of brands, including Bobux, Ricosta Pepino, Froddo and Camper, from prewalkers to size EU29 and school shoes up to EU38. www.ceceandme.co.uk

GRID NEWS FAMILY PAGES

SPLASHING AROUND



Our local splash pads and paddling pools are ready for long summer days (fingers crossed!), with Wimbledon Park's pad open 10am - 5pm every day until 8th September.

LITTLE CITY

The award-winning mobile role-play Little City SW London visits areas once a month for your toddler/preschooler to explore and enjoy! Using bespoke backdrops and specially selected high-quality toys, children fully immerse themselves in their own world and welcome you in too!

Offering child-led stay and play events, party packages and school workshops in Southfields and around, children can visit the 3 Bears Cafe for tea, touch up your roots in Goldilocks Salon and call in at the Little City Supermarket on your way home!

Find out more about sessions in Southfields area here <https://bookwhen.com/littlecityswlondon> or email nikki@littlecityuk.com



LEARN TO LOVE READING

Learn to Love to Read is a small local charity aiming to support Wandsworth children who find reading challenging. Our vision is to help children develop the skill and love of reading, as we know being a confident reader is key to a child's success at school and beyond.

The impact of both the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis has made our work more important than ever. In 2022, 25% of children left primary school unable to read at the government's expected standard, and recent research from the National Literacy Trust revealed: 'We know that experiencing poverty and financial strain impacts children's literacy. With families not being able to afford books and having less time and energy to spend reading, writing, and talking to their children at home.'



HELPING CHILDREN READ

At L2L2R we support children aged 0-11 by providing one-to-one reading support in primary schools and online, as well as early years classes to ensure children start school ready to learn to read. We also provide training, workshops and support for parents and carers to give them the confidence to support their children's reading at home.

Could you help us make a difference by volunteering one afternoon a week in one of our Southfields primary schools? Being solely Wandsworth based we are unique from bigger national reading charities as we provide a local network of volunteers, with regular socials, training and ongoing support. We are delighted to already have a number of Grid residents as volunteers, and would love to recruit more. No experience is necessary. You can apply online at www.learn2love2read.org.uk or email matilda@l2l2r.org for more information.

BURN OFF EXCESS ENERGY

If you're looking for a fun energy-burning local activity during the holidays, why not try Junior Park Run every Sunday at 9am in Wimbledon Park. We always spot lots of friends from the Grid cheering on little ones and their parents as they run the 2k circuit. Children from 4-14 are welcome to join, there's no pressure to run a particular time, and it's a great excuse for a coffee and croissant afterwards!

It's run entirely by volunteers, so if you'd like to volunteer email wimbledonparkjuniors@parkrun.com To register for a run see www.parkrun.org.uk

If you have any items, information or wish to advertise in these family pages, or Grid News in general, please contact at info@southfieldsgrid.org.uk Copy deadline for the autumn/winter issue will be Friday 18th October.

LOCAL TRANSPORT MOSAIC RESTORED TO 1920'S GLORY

By *Charles Runcie*

A 13-metre-long green and gold mosaic sign dating from the earliest days of commercial vehicle and coach travel and situated here in Southfields has been restored to its original state..

The United Service Transport (UST) Company's garage on Merton Road, now partly hidden behind the Shell garage, was built in 1929 and adorned with a huge, beautiful decorative mosaic bearing the company's name. Very few of these historic signs now survive, this one being particularly important as it's the last of three United Service Transport Co. signs that once existed.

The United Service Transport Company Ltd was established by Walter Flexman French, who had started a bicycle business in 1883. His business evolved into one of the first passenger transport companies in the UK. Coach trips from London were offered daily to newly popular leisure destinations. Londoners in their hundreds visited Margate, Ramsgate, Hastings, Eastbourne, Whitstable and Brighton on the 'United Green' coaches. Day trippers also went to race meetings at Windsor, Goodwood and Newbury. The company eventually merged with others,



'ALL ABOARD' RINGS CLIVE

and the name disappeared. The green sign was in a poor state of repair recently, with many mosaic pieces missing.

Transport fans in our community became increasingly concerned about the state of the sign, so the SGRA successfully approached the Heritage of London Trust (HOLT) to help fund and manage its repair. HOLT has helped restore over 800 historic buildings and monuments across London. The actual restoration work was carried out by specialist

conservators London Stone Conservation. They had to repair the wall behind the mosaic, piecing back individual yellow and green glass mosaic pieces, with numerous replacement tile pieces having to be sourced from Italy. Local school groups visited the site to see them at work as part of the 'Proud Places' youth engagement programme.

The sign was rededicated on Tuesday 2nd July, hosted by Dr Nicola Stacey, Director of the Heritage of London Trust. Transport expert Clive Williams, who has researched the UST company's history, performed the opening "bell ring" with gusto. "We're thrilled to see this fantastic piece of transport and social history restored, all the more important as its two sister signs have been destroyed" commented Dr Stacey afterwards. "It represents the pride and excitement of early coach travel, and it's been wonderful to have had so much local support."

Heritage of London Trust were generously supported by the Southfields Grid Residents' Association, HR Owen, The Sutton Byre Charitable Trust, the Jones Day Foundation and anonymous donations from two local residents.

www.heritageoflondon.org

LOCAL PLANNING AND SHOPS UPDATE

By *Margaret Brett SGRA Executive Committee*

This is our regular update on any current council planning matters that affect us in Southfields Grid. The outstanding public realm works around the town centre are unfortunately still not finished. The block bases at the tube station have been clad, but we are still awaiting the seating. The water fountain was cordoned off until recently while gas contractors SGN continued digging up that corner once again.

In response to our complaints Sidonie Forrest-Brown, Senior Transport Planner at Wandsworth Council replied: "There is a delay to the timber top seating at the tube station as the brackets have not yet arrived. This is very frustrating as we have been waiting so long. I will let you know once they arrive and the work is planned. We are also aware of the poor reinstatement at the water fountain and are currently chasing Thames Water and SGN to repair this properly. I spoke to the engineers, and they are still waiting for a response."

Wimbledon Park Rifle Club has finally managed to buy the freehold of the land for which they held a lease. They hope to tidy up the access way within the next few months. Their long term ambition is to renew the clubhouse, then make it more accessible for community use.


Shops news - we have seen the opening of two more new coffee shops in June. Brookwood Gardens is the former Loney Miller offices at the top of Brookwood Road. It appeals to a family clientele with an outdoor back area. Meanwhile the Feel Good Coffee House is on Wimbledon Park Road next to Gail's - see the article on page 14. John Walker on Replingham Road has changed its offer, and is now also selling hot pizzas. The Villager Hair Salon has sadly closed, as has Decorative Antiques.

This year has been great for roses, and the wet spring weather has led to the burgeoning of front hedges and shrubs. Some of these have become very overgrown and are hanging over our Grid pavements. Overgrown foliage can cause problems for people passing by, particularly those with impaired sight or buggies. Please take some time to cut back your hedges and shrubs.

Any obstruction of particular concern can be reported to on-street services at Wandsworth Council via their website www.wandsworth.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-street-problem

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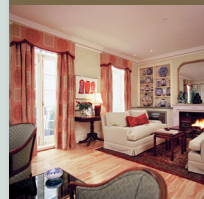
Finch Partridge have recently completed several projects on the Southfields grid, including this bespoke garden office on Trentham Street. It is fully air-conditioned, has additional garden storage and was completed in just 4 weeks. To speak to Tom or Russell for your no obligation quote, call Tom on 07706352879 or Russell on 07500854901.

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HAYLEY'S FRONT GARDEN AWARDS DEBUT WIN



HAYLEY'S WINNER

By *Amelia Obertelli-Moriarty*

A big thank you to all Grid gardeners for giving us so many super front gardens and planted tree bases to look at, as we judges wended our way around the local streets recently. It has been a delight, as we have found some lovely new gardens to acknowledge this year as well as equally lovely veteran gardens.

This year we handed out 25 Outstanding and around 120 Delightful Awards plus 12 'best in street' planted tree base awards. We are thrilled to have been able to hand out so many awards, as the 11 judges are at their happiest when giving out awards! Bravo to all our marvellous gardeners.



NICOLA AND JONATHAN'S

Please can we ask you to put your awards in a prominent place, so everyone can applaud your efforts and commitment to greening the Grid. I know that there were some of you who did not quite manage an award. Please do not be disheartened, as we do appreciate all our gardeners, and sincerely thank you for all your efforts and please keep gardening.

Our winner is 118 Elborough Street, a newcomer to the awards lovingly tended by Hayley. It's beautifully designed with blooms and greenery, both planted and in pots everywhere. A perfect place to sit on a warm summer's evening. Stunning!

Our very worthy runners-up are 154 Clonmore Street. Again another new garden for us,



KEZ'S FINEST

beautifully cared for by Nicola and Jonathan. A fantastic garden with a glorious cherry tree as a focal point surrounded by luscious plants and flowers. Wondrous!

Our second runner up is well known to us, having been a runner up twice before, it's 16 Lavenham Road. Well done again Kez! The judges were once again captivated by the impact, calmness and serenity of this beautiful predominantly white garden, which also houses camouflaged compost for garden and vegetable waste. Phenomenal!

We will see you all again in 2025 so please, keep gardening!

FRIENDS OF WIMBLEDON PARK UPDATE

By *Damaris Albarran*

After a wall of silence and a long wait the park cafe finally reopened on Monday 24th June. There were progress reports on Instagram @cookskitchen2023, dedicated to Wimbledon Park cafe in the final weeks, so we knew something was going to happen. The decor is fresh, and includes a picture of Capability Brown and other images connected with our Park and the area. Eggs Benedict is probably the most challenging item on the menu, but we haven't tried it yet. The cafe is open every day from 8am-7pm, and we hope it proves an immense success.

The Friends of Wimbledon Park (FWOP) used funds from the National Grid, and we hope Merton Council, on upgrading the appearance of the Revelstoke Road entrance and car park by extending the hedge that runs down that side of the Park. It's not the right time of year to plant trees, so this is planned for late autumn. Meanwhile a few

hawthorn saplings have taken, and grass sown by park managers /dverde and some cornflowers planted by children from the nursery school are beginning to grow. The intention is to provide more cover for wildlife as well as improve the appearance of the area, so please bear with us while nature takes over and fills the gaps.

A fine new wooden bench has been kindly donated by Brian Flasck, who has been living on the Grid for more than 25 years and says he has always treasured our wonderful park. The bench is located between the main children's playground and the tennis courts. The other wooden benches in the Park need some TLC, which we hope to provide with the help of our volunteers.

I was surprised to see recently nearly all the geese on the Lake were Egyptian geese with their characteristic black eyepatches. There was only one gosling with them, which seemed sad, as so many others must have

been eaten by one of the many predators that wildfowl parents have to fear. These include large fish and herons as well as non-aquatic enemies such as foxes, rats and jays. There never seem to be any ducklings these days, so life must be tough for the parents. I was also disappointed not to see the mandarin ducks who seemed to be planning a family here earlier in the year. Let's hope they were just in a more discreet location. However, the swans have five cygnets, and these will grow fast now and be as big as their parents by autumn. If you are curious about the Park's wildlife do please read Dr. Dave Dawson's excellent blog, which is regularly updated. You can find it at <https://davegdawsonwp.blogspot.com>

As usual, please address any questions, comments or an interest in being more involved in our work in Wimbledon Park to membership.fowp@gmail.com

MUSIC ACADEMY'S WORK IS A FAMILY AFFAIR

By Grid resident and local music teacher Michael Csanyi-Wills

My wife Nunziatina and I met in 1989 at the tender age of 12 on a music course called 'Pro Corda' in Suffolk. We fell in love, wrote letters, lost touch, then found each other again 19 years later. We moved to Clonmore Street in 2011 and got married a few months later. Both our lives are as freelance musicians. I'm a composer and pianist, and Nunziatina's a cellist, as well as being an amazing artist. You can find her work at <https://ndelvecchio-art.co.uk>

One day I went into our local, wonderful

'Chanteroy' deli on Wimbledon Park Road opposite the tube station. Ahead of me in the queue was Sahana Gero, who had just opened World Heart Beat Music Academy (WHB) on nearby Kimber Road. I started teaching young piano and composition students in 2012, and Nunziatina started teaching cello there in 2020. Our children Luca and Francesca both started piano lessons quite young, as they had me at home to encourage them.

In 2017 the Academy had one of its regular open days, allowing young people to try out musical instruments. Luca fell in love with the French horn, and Francesca the clarinet. They've not looked back since, and the

opportunities they've been given have been quite extraordinary. This culminated in Luca taking part in a fundraising concert for WHB at the Wigmore Hall last year. World Heart Beat has gone from strength to strength. It's opened a new, state-of-the-art concert hall and recording studio in Battersea, which gives opportunities to communities across Wandsworth.

If you'd like to support disadvantaged young people to find the transformative power of music, please sign up to its membership scheme <https://worldheartbeat.org/become-a-member/> and book concert tickets here <https://worldheartbeat.org/whats-on/>

SOUTHFIELDS GETS ITS FIRST BLUE PLAQUE

By Alice Fookes United Nations Women

What's the connection between Southfields and a famous First Lady of the USA? Thanks to some amazing local support we were able in the spring to erect two identical blue plaques celebrating Eleanor Roosevelt's 3 years at Allenswood School here in SW London. One is situated by the entrance to Southfields Library and the other is at the Allenswood entrance to the Wimbledon Park Estate from Albert Drive, which was the original site of Allenswood School.

The school was built in the mock Tudor revival style between 1865-70 for the international clientele who could afford to send their daughters there. The school attracted European aristocracy, the daughters of wealthy businesspeople and politicians and



the American upper classes. They enrolled their daughters because Headmistress Marie Souvestre, who had bought the school in 1883, was already well known in France for her progressive views. She felt strongly that girls should receive a well-rounded education stressing social responsibility, social justice and thinking for oneself. These views were

something almost unheard of for women at that time in Britain.

For 3 years young Eleanor enjoyed this wonderful setting in Southfields, and an exceptional education at Allenswood School would see her marry her 5th cousin Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who became President of the USA from 1932 to his death in 1945. She in turn became his highly influential First Lady. She was the first female delegate to the United Nations, and served as the first chair of the UN Commission on Human Rights.

Having finally got the two plaques up I am looking to build on this, as both a local resident as well as a member of United Nations Women. If you can share any information you may already have on the history of Allenswood School, or have any connected memorabilia, I'd be fascinated to see it. Please contact me any time at alicefookes@yahoo.com

A JAM-PACKED SUMMER AT SOUTHFIELDS LIBRARY

By Sucheta Sumat, Library Manager

As the grey clouds melt away and summer sunshine rolls in, Southfields Library is excited to provide many new resources, events, and books to our library users.

For adults, we host a weekly English Conversation Club. It's a welcoming environment to improve your English speaking and listening skills. We also host an English to Speakers of other Languages (ESOL) reading group which focuses on reading skills.

- English Conversation Club: Fridays, 2-3pm
- ESOL Reading Group: 1st, 3rd and 4th Fridays of each month from 10-11am

Looking for the newest bestseller or a fun beach read? Every week we receives new books, including prize winners, ready for you to take home or reserve for a small fee.

For children, we were excited to kickstart our Summer Reading Challenge on 6th July. From July to September children taking part in 'Marvellous Makers' can discover new stories, join in with free activities at the library, and explore their creativity from junk modelling to music, dance to drawing and painting. Be sure to come into the library and pick up your pack. Last year hundreds of children joined and completed the challenge. With your help we can try and beat all the other libraries.

We have also lined up local authors to come to our library over the summer:

- Aliya Ali-Afzal, author of 'The Big Day,' is visiting on 20th July
- Sarah Clarke, author of 'The Night She Dies' is visiting on 31st August
- children's author Lakshmi Raj-Jesa who wrote 'Finn Button and the Discovery of Adria'

is here in August

Do pick up our monthly newsletter which will have all the details.

We'd like to thank our many volunteers for helping us with our everyday tasks and running some of our clubs. From the Italian conversation club to our Silver Circle Reading Group, we appreciate all our volunteers. The library is always looking for new volunteers to start new activities or clubs. If you have a special skill/interest and would like to volunteer and host your own event/club at the library, please get in touch with us today.

Alternatively, teenagers can apply to do some unpaid work experience or have a Duke of Edinburgh Award placement during the summer holidays. If you are interested in any of this email us at southfields.library@gll.org

600 PLANTS SHARED TO GREEN SOUTHFIELDS

By *Nina Kowalska, Green the Grid*

There was a good turnout for Green the Grid's summer planting event, held in conjunction with the 'Southfields Mend, Fix and Repair Cafe' at St Barnabas Church on Saturday 15th June. This was despite rather variable weather on the day, including some sudden downpours, but this did not deter people.

We found homes for all 600 pollinator-friendly plants which our group of over 20 Grid Growers had grown from mini plug plants. We also received donations of around 100 plants on the day - tomatoes, hydrangeas, Scottish thistle and nasturtium as well as donations of seeds and pots.

It's great to see that our project continues to attract interest, and also to see some of the plants have already been planted in tree bases around the Grid. We enjoyed talking to everyone about their gardening plans, and we hope we have inspired more residents to



A BUSY STALL

plant their front gardens.

Sadly our motto "Plant Don't Pave" is still needed, as the full paving of front gardens in the Grid still happens. The wet spring we've had this year highlights the need for

permeable surfaces in our front gardens, to allow run-off to reduce the risk of flooding as our weather becomes ever more unpredictable. Greening our front gardens is one of the easiest and most attractive ways of doing this. This doesn't need a lot of time or money. From pebbles being used instead of paving to evergreen hedges being planted, everything we do makes a difference.

We'd like to say a big 'thank you' to everyone that helped to make the day a success. These include our Grid Growers, everyone who took part and donated to the event, Krystals for donating house plants, and Southfields Mend, Fix and Repair Cafe for being our partner organisation for the event. We are also grateful to have received a small grant from Wandsworth Council which helped us put on the event.

Keep up to date on what we are up to via our website, Facebook or Instagram. If you'd like to join our team of Grid Growers email us on greenthegridsw18@hotmail.com

A BUSY AUTUMN FOR OUR FAB FESTIVALS

No less than THREE favourite Southfields annual events take place this autumn, and the organisers have been in touch to extend a welcome to you to get involved, either as a visitor or even a participant.

On Saturday 28th September 'Southfields Harvest', the Grid's favourite neighbourhood festival, returns to St Barnabas Church. To mark Wandsworth's 'Sustainable September' this year they'll be joining forces with the popular 'Mend, Fix and Repair Cafe', Green The Grid and other Harvest favourites, including Abundance cider and King George's Park allotment holders - all together to highlight a Sustainable Southfields. As always you can look forward to locally grown, homemade produce and treats to buy and share. Don't miss this chance to network with your neighbours and connect with your community.

If you have a community initiative you'd like to promote, or to find

out more generally, contact the organisers at southfieldsharvest@gmail.com

Meanwhile 2023 proved to be a wonderful year for the Southfields Artists Group. Many of them took part in Wandsworth Artists' Open House 2023. Twenty seven local artists opened their homes, studios and welcomed the public in. The event was an immense success. The preparations are nearly completed for a repeat in 2024. It will take place on Saturday and Sunday 5/6th and Saturday and Sunday 12/13th October. Please put the dates in your diary, come and visit, and help make the event an even bigger success.

The Southfields artists are looking forward to your visit, and if you want to get in touch with group please contact slavica@melroseroad.net

EMILY SCOOPS SUSTAINABILITY AWARD

By *Charles Runcie*

A Grid business is celebrating being awarded 'Best Sustainable Business' at the Wandsworth Women's Enterprise Awards. The Furniture Narrative, based in Heythorpe Street, offers furniture repair, restoration, and refurbishment services, and in its time has rescued and restored no less than 100 pieces of furniture from landfill. However its philosophy extends further than simply rescuing items to reduce furniture waste.

Founder Emily Slaven says her mission is to encourage people to recognise their things are worth repairing and cherishing, rather than simply discarding. "Sustainability is the driving force behind every decision I make and was a primary reason behind



EMILY WITH HER TROPHY

starting the business" she told Grid News. "I feel so proud to be recognised as a leader

in championing sustainable practices and promoting conscious consumerism.

With a 5* average rating on Google and glowing customer reviews, Emily's clients clearly value her business. The reviews mention her passion, the high standard of work as well as Emily's friendliness. "Winning this award is confirmation my business is making a difference. I'm really excited to start the next chapter and am looking forward to working with more of my neighbours helping them to rediscover the beauty in their furniture". Emily is often on hand at 'Mend, Fix and Repair Cafes', the next one being on Saturday 28th September.

You can find and buy examples of her work at www.thefurniturenarrative.co.uk

FRIENDS OF CORONATION GARDENS UPDATE

The opening ceremony of our children's play area and the flagpole for our Green Flag award is on Thursday 25th July from 3.15pm. The fun includes a storyteller and a nature 'walk and talk'.

Bring your kids! We ran a competition this spring along with the Friends of Putney School of Art and Design (PSAD) to design a replacement figurine to adorn our century-old fountain, replacing the original one believed stolen. From the five finalists the winner was judged as Gillian Brett, a long-standing student of the PSAD. Her proposal is a homage to Fanny Wilkinson, who designed Coronation Gardens in 1903 and was the first professional female landscape designer in Britain.

Gillian explains her proposal in more detail: "My figure is holding out a small plant, not only commemorating Fanny Wilkinson's devotion to planning gardens but also to symbolise the growing shoots of creativity. I would be able to add the olive branch detail, which forms part of the Friends of Coronation Gardens logo, to the skirt of the statuette as a repeating design." During her career Fanny oversaw the design and layout of more than 75 public gardens across London. The announcement was made on Friday 21st June at the opening of the PSAD's summer exhibition. Gillian also received a small cash prize, as do all the finalists, and work is expected to take until spring 2025 to complete.



WINNER GILLIAN (CENTRE)

Our Gardening Club continues to meet on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month from 10-11.30 am to help plant, weed and generally improve the Gardens. We're up to around 18 members, led by committee member and gardening lead Tara Osman. There's been a fair amount of watering, and we're investing in a watering hose to avoid back strain. It's not only proving a popular pastime, but helping young people achieve their aims. Oscar, the 17 year old son of Gardening Club member Jane, has been working with us as part of his Duke of Edinburgh award scheme commitment. He says: "It's really enjoyable. Tara is good at organising, and the group of people are fun. I learnt a lot about gardening." Bravo, Oscar!

We're hoping to tie down a date to formally open both the children's play area and our flagpole, hopefully a Friday in mid-July before the summer holidays begin on 24th July. We've not

yet heard back from Enable, so will release it on social media plus our website when it's decided.

Finally a reminder if you are a member of the FoCG to check you're up to date with your subs. Please visit our website to find out more about how to renew or join, as well as learning more about what we do. www.focoronationgardens.co.uk

LOCAL COFFEE SHOP BREWING UP A DIFFERENCE

There has been a flurry of great coffee shops opening around the Grid - 'The Drop' on Revelstoke Road and 'El Cafetal', the family-friendly 'Brookwood Garden' at the top of Brookwood Road, and 'Wylie's' either end of Replingham Road, all busy offering great coffee and pastries - but there's one with a difference. 'Feel Good' coffee house opened in early June near the traffic lights on Wimbledon Park Road. Every organic coffee bought funds a meal for a child in need, and it employs local baristas who face barriers into employment.

It started in 2000 when CEO and founder Andy Smith and his wife Clare, its Managing Director, saw at first-hand the challenges many young people faced on the large Roehampton housing estate where they still live. In response to this they started the charity Regenerate, which works to inspire and support local young people aged 10-24. On the estate there are now thousands of young people thriving, but still some who fall through the cracks.

Andy recalls a conversation: "One evening I was sitting with one of these lads, an 18-year-old, who said to me he hated his life, he wanted to change, didn't want to sell crack any more, but couldn't even get a job. What could he do?." Regenerate rose to meet this need, and in 2014 Feel Good was born, a social enterprise working to create jobs and provide mentoring within a 12-month programme. Since then it's employed over 120 local young people, first as a bakery delivery service and since 2020 as trained baristas for Feel Good coffee carts.

Andy and Clare have been delighted by the response from the Grid and beyond. "It feels so good seeing coffee sales here in Southfields have such an impact on young people locally" explains Andy "and also for children thousands of miles away at our partner projects in Kenya and Romania. All because people on Southfields are having a cup of Feel Good coffee." He adds that launching the Feel Good coffee

house will enable Regenerate to employ over 40 young people a year, foster community spirit, and continue to make a positive difference in the lives of young people.

www.feelgood.london.org



FEEL GOOD COFFEE SHOP

SOUTHFIELDS BUSINESS FORUM UPDATE

The revived Southfields Business Forum (SBF) continues to grow, with new members joining us and many exciting developments.

With a beautiful map of Southfields illustrated for us by Jo Corlett @jocorlettpaintsanddraws (see photo), a brand new website and a popular Instagram account, we hope to encourage many new visitors to Southfields to our main shopping streets and amazing online businesses.

We are incredibly grateful to the Southfields Grid Residents' Association for their support and donation, as well as a contribution from the All England Club (AELTC). We're looking forward to building our relationship with the AELTC over the coming year.

Meeting regularly, our focus has recently been up on preparing Southfields for the tennis championships. This will now shift to other priorities! Next, discussions will include how to encourage local online businesses to join us, how to best support our existing members, and (whisper it!) our Christmas events.

We would love new members and welcome everyone to join, those with a physical presence in Southfields as well as local residents with online businesses, and those just setting up. We offer a tiered system to make sure membership is fair for all. Please



follow us on Instagram @southfields_business_forum, visit our website www.southfieldsbusinessforum.org.uk or email hello@southfieldsbusinessforum.org.uk if you'd like to join or just find out more.

THOSE ODD POSTBOXES - MYSTERY SOLVED!

You may remember our front page article in the spring issue of Grid News on those curious painted postboxes. SGRA committee member Clive Williams has this explanation:

I remember them being installed locally at the turn of the century. These grey painted boxes with a Royal Mail name plate were called 'Royal Mail Pouch Boxes,' named after the canvas bags, satchels or pouches used by posties for deliveries at that time. They caused a lot of discussion locally about obstruction of pavements, visual hazards for blind people

and those with impaired sight, and their height off the ground.

The idea was when we had two daily postal deliveries there was a lot of 'dead' time when 'posties' walked back to the Sorting Office in Twilley Street, then back to the Grid between the two deliveries. Royal Mail came up with the idea of putting a locked container somewhere near the end of a postie's walk with a second full postal pouch, so the postie could move on to another walk. They were not in use for long, as soon after second daily

deliveries were scrapped.

Interestingly all locations needed individual planning permissions. There were numerous planning applications in 2003, 2005 and 2007, and for a previous version attached to the side of pillar boxes in use even as far back as 1994. The council was able to refuse those locations which it felt were inappropriate, so Royal Mail then had to reapply with a new location.

So now you know - thanks Clive!

GABRIELLA BOOK ON FAMILIES AND NANNIES

Gabriella Sellars is a Grid resident who has recently authored a book: "My Nanny and Me: when it's time to say goodbye" alongside her nanny Amy. The book supports children through the emotional transition of when a nanny leaves the family. Given the Grid's densely populated with families, many of whom have nannies, she's sure it will be relevant for many of them.

Amy has had the idea for this book for many years, having gone through the emotional transition of leaving families but not had the resources to produce it. When Amy mentioned the idea to Gabriella, they decided to collaborate. Gabriella wrote the first draft, Amy tweaked it and the rest is history. She says "We passionately believe there isn't any other book like this on the market. It's so important to ensure children, nannies and



parents alike have a positive experience when moving on to the next chapter."

Both have been overwhelmed with how positive people have been about the book, both locally and on a bigger scale. The Queen of nannies Nanny Louenna, who has 100,000 Instagram followers, posted about the book recommending it to all her followers. They have some collaborations in the pipeline coming up with other international childcare providers and influencers. "We would love to continue the journey of 'My Nanny and Me'", adds Gabriella. "We have other books in the pipeline."

The book is available from Amazon, and you can follow Gabriella's progress on Instagram at @Mynannyandme_picturebooks

LOCAL FACILITIES AND ORGANISATIONS

SGRA Executive Committee

Chairman: Charles Runcie | 020 8875 9565
charles@charlesruncie.co.uk

Secretary: Ian Shaw | 07554 898538
imks11662@outlook.com

Members Sec: Serena Potter | 07778 419569
sgrasecretary@gmail.com

Treasurer: David Boyle | 07936 210927
depboyle09@gmail.com

Committee Members: Margaret
Brett, Kyle Forder, Ann Kerr, Rod
Lewington, Amelia Obertelli-Moriarty,
Ameet Phadnis, Clive Williams

Street Representatives

Astonville Street
Lesley McCaul at 109

Brookwood Road
Ian Shaw at 147

Clonmore Street, Mid & North Blocks 1-79
Ann Kerr at 72

Clonmore Street, South Block 80-179
Nick Steiner at 116

Elborough Street
Peter Smith at 42

Elsenhams Street
Oliver Ashbee at 78
Andrew Dunley at 90

Engadine Street
Isabelle Lemettre at 116

Hamilton Mews
Charles Runcie at 17 Pirbright

Hanford Close
Vacancy, volunteers welcome, please contact us

Heythorp Street
Kyra von Schottenstein at 127

Langton Place
David Boyle at 12

Lavenham Road
Margaret Brett at 15 Elsenham

Merton Road
Tim Lynch timothyedwardlynch@yahoo.co.uk

Pirbright Road
Charles Runcie at 17

Replingham Road
Ameet Phadnis at 48

Revelstoke Road
Rosie and Sam Rickman at 66

Trentham Street
Trevor Howes at 70
Amelia Obertelli-Moriarty at 169

Business

Southfields Business Forum - www.southfieldsbusinessforum.org.uk
Wandsworth Chamber of Commerce www.wandsworthchamber.org

Cultural

Singswell - www.singswell.co.uk
"Southfields storyteller" - www.hannahneed.co.uk
Sounds of Southfields - www.soundsofsouthfields.co.uk
Southfields Artists Group - via slavica@melroseroad.net
Southfields Theatre Group - contact via www.facebook.com/southfieldstg
Southfields Sings - www.naturalvoice.net/choir/southfields-sings
Window Wanderland - www.windowwanderland.com/southfields
World Heartbeat Music Academy - www.worldheartbeat.org

Faith

St Barnabas, Lavenham Road - www.stbarnabas-southfields.org.uk
Everyday Church, Wimbledon Park Road - www.everyday.org.uk/southfields
Ahmadiyya Mosque, Gressenhall Road - www.loveforallthatredfornone.org
Wimbledon Mosque, Durnsford Road - www.wimbledonmosque.org

Interest groups

Friends of Coronation Gardens - www.focoronationgardens.co.uk
Friends of Wimbledon Park - www.friendsofwimbledonpark.org.uk
Green the Grid - www.frontgardenfriendly.uk
Grid Mummies - erica_loi@hotmail.com
Wandsworth Tree Wardens www.wandsworthtreewardens.org
Walk and Talk Movement, Wimbledon Park www.walkandtalkmovement.org

Library

Southfields Library, Wimbledon Park Road - open Tuesdays & Wednesdays
9-7pm, Friday 9-5pm, Saturday 10-2.30pm
www.better.org.uk/library/london/wandsworth/southfields-library

Nearby Resident Associations

Gardens RA - jonathan@pinkess.com
Southfields Triangle - info@stra6.org.uk
Sutherland Grove Conservation Area RA - admin@sgcara.org.uk
Wimbledon Park RA - www.wimbledonpark.com

Police

If an incident is an emergency, ring 999 immediately. If not, ring 101.
Southfields - 020 8721 2434 or southfields@met.police.uk
Parks Police - 07500 814108 or parkspolice@wandsworth.gov.uk

Senior groups

Hestia adult support - www.hestia.org/older-people or 020 8767 8426
Monday Club, c/o St Barnabas Church - email ma_brett@hotmail.com
Wandsworth Older Peoples Forum - www.wopf.org.uk

Sport

All England Club - www.wimbledon.com
Swimbleton, wild swimming - www.swimbleton.co.uk
'Tag' Rugby - Jake.Dunley@hotmail.com
Wandsworth Boxing Club - www.wandsworthboxingclub.co.uk

Sustainability

Abundance Southfields - www.abundancesouthfields.com
Recycle More Southfields - www.recyclemoresouthfields.org
Mend, Fix and Repair Cafe - restartsouthfields@gmail.com
Council Tree officers - trees@enablelc.org

PLEASE JOIN THE SGRA

The SGRA's financial and membership year runs from 1st June – 31st May, and donations are a minimum £5 annually. There are several easy ways to pay:

- Cash to your street representative, list above
- PayPal - Log in to your PayPal account:
treasurer@southfieldsgrid.org.uk
- BACS - our details are Barclays Bank, sort code 20-90-69,
a/c 83500020 Southfields Grid Residents' Association

If you'd like to join our SGRA database we must have your consent for GDPR regulations. You can do this by emailing sgrasecretary@gmail.com to confirm your payment, and our database will be updated. Please put your Grid address in the online reference box so we can add you to our email database.

Forthcoming local events - all at St Barnabas Church except where listed

Saturday 20th July - Police Safer Neighbourhood Team Ward Panel meeting, 10.30am
Tuesday 23rd July - SGRA public meeting, starts 7.45pm
Sunday 8th September - Rev Ian Tattum's final services, 9am and 10.30am
Tuesday 24th September - SGRA public meeting, starts 7.45pm
Saturday 28th September - Southfields Harvest, 12-3pm, including Mend, Fix, Repair Cafe
Tuesday 26th November - SGRA public meeting, starts 7.45pm

The Autumn/Winter 2024 issue of Grid News will be published in mid-November. Items, articles and pictures for consideration should be sent to the Editor by Friday 18th October. Email info@southfieldsgrid.org.uk, and we'd love to hear from you.