

Southgate District Civic Voice

Newsletter No. 269
Oct. 2024

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

(Registered as an amenity society with Civic Voice).



COMING EVENTS

AUTUMN OPEN MEETING

Saturday 26th October 2024 at 2.30pm
at Walker Lower Hall, Christ Church Parish Centre
7 The Green, Southgate, N14 7EG

ILLUMINATING ART - FROM LAMPSHADES TO LANDMARKS - A DESIGNER'S JOURNEY

As announced in our July 2024 edition, Dan Maier, SDCV member and the designer behind the Southgate Art Crossing and artwork at Southgate station, will give an illustrated talk exploring her remarkable journey through the world of design and public art. (See the July newsletter, page 14, for more details).



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Contributions to the January newsletter should be sent by Friday 13th December 2024
to the Editor: Colin Barratt, 48 Maplin Close, Winchmore Hill, London, N21 1NB
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Note:- Copies will be emailed, hand delivered or posted during week commencing **6th January 2025**.

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

PALMERS GREEN FESTIVAL 2024

For the first time since the Covid pandemic SDCV had a stall at this festival in Broomfield Park. We were given a location in the area behind Broomfield House, next to The Enfield Society stall, and we used our new 2 metre tall bright yellow pull-up banner to publicise ourselves, which was an attractive feature. The weather was warm and sunny and the event attracted a lot of visitors. Our stall had a regular stream of people, and we signed up a few new members, although only a limited number of our existing members called in. The campaign to save our local libraries was one of our prominent displays and we were encouraging visitors to write their comments on post-it notes and pin them up for us to later summarise. (See the article on page 6).



We had a full display of our books and DVDs, with reduced prices and a special offer for bundles of all five of our Oakleaves books. We made quite a number of sales. We also had bundles of our postcards with local views, which we gave away to anyone interested, to help reduce our large stock.

Mervyn Maggs had created a working model tesla ball to

display on our stall, as a nod to the one featured on top of Southgate Station. Unfortunately, the bright sunshine outside made it almost impossible to see it working. No doubt it will be shown again at one of our later meetings, perhaps in more subdued light! Elaine had set up a tablet, with a rolling gallery of old photos, first used at our 60th Anniversary lunch. There was a map showing the area covered by SDCV, to prove to anyone that we weren't just a society interested in Southgate.



It was a long day for those on the Executive Committee who were there for the whole time, but the workload was shared by a rota of helpers, which was appreciated. It was quite a lot of work to set up and pack away, but I think we agreed it had been worth it. With the demise of Christ Church May Day Fair, Palmers Green is the only festival where we can showcase what we are about and talk to the public. I expect we will be there again next year.

Colin Barratt

SOUTHGATE IMPROVEMENTS IN 2024

So far this year ...

... there have been improvements to Southgate Library, with the artwork by Dan Maier. Plus, the Ashfield Parade Parklets, with a variety of trees as well as drawings developed by local young people.



See previous newsletter No.267 in April 24 for details.



And, coming soon ...

Rain Gardens on Chase Side

Delighted to report that after so many years of discussing rain gardens in Southgate, they are finally on their way!

Construction works for the three rain gardens to be installed along Chase Side started on Monday 16th September. The work should last for approximately 7 weeks.



The first two to be installed are:

- in front of Classy Cleaners, 26 Chase Side N14; and
- in front of Ellinikon Bakery, 42 Chase Side N14;

Work on third one, by the bus stop in front of the Kodak Express, will start in the first half of October.



Site 01 - Streetview



Site 02 - Streetview



Site 03 - Streetview

Pocket Park near Nandos

Another project we have been talking about for so many years, but finally the improvements to the Pocket Park adjacent to Nando's are underway.

A contractor is working on the fabrication of the seating units and stepping logs and their installation should take place at the beginning of October, followed by improvement works to the grassed area and pathway that should take a couple of weeks.

The Journeys and Places team from Enfield Council are hoping to organise some community planting activities for both projects towards the end of October and launch them around mid-November.



This will be in conjunction with other community groups and local schools. When we have more details, they will be sent out in an E-News Update.

More details on construction work can be found here:

https://letstalk.enfield.gov.uk/southgate/news_feed/chase-side-raingardens-and-pocket-park-construction

Art Trail on Chase Side

Mosaic artists **Alex McHallam** and **Liz Taranti** are working with local residents to create this new artwork, which will reflect Southgate's history and local communities.



SDCV was part of the commissioning team, so were delighted to see their ideas taking shape at the recent workshop in the Southgate Club.

Southgate Master Planning Vision

The Journeys and Places team have appointed *East Architecture* to work with them developing a strategic master planning vision for Southgate Town Centre.

We understand the intention is to publish this vision in March 2025, which will then allow Enfield Council to apply for external grant funding to deliver changes over a number of years.

The work on the vision is starting now and they will organise a series of community engagement sessions to involve residents, community organisations, traders and businesses in the development of this document.

We will let you know when we have more details, but there is some information on the council website here: https://letstalk.enfield.gov.uk/southgate/news_feed/southgate-vision-masterplan

Blue Container by Station

Removal has been delayed again by TfL renovation work, but we are assured it will go in December. Once it has gone, local groups including SDCV, will be working with TfL and the Bee Friendly Trust on new planting around the station.

Jane Maggs

Photos: Mervyn Maggs, Dan Maier & Natalie Gee

ENVIRONMENT & PLANNING

DRAFT ENFIELD LOCAL PLAN 2019-2024

During August the Council's draft Local Plan reached another significant milestone with the presentation of the Plan and the Regulation 19 submissions to the Planning Inspectorate. This follows from an earlier stage of consultation (Regulation 18) when views were sought on the draft Plan and the more formal Regulation 19 consultation when residents had the opportunity to comment again on a revised Plan that the Council had approved for submission to the Inspectorate.

A Planning Inspector has now been appointed and a Programme Officer is in post to support the Inspector. Although they have Enfield Council email addresses, they are entirely independent from the Council being part of the Government's Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government. The formal Examination of the Plan has therefore started.

An Examination of a Local Plan is a different process to a Planning Inquiry. In a Local Plan Examination, the Inspectors role is to determine whether the Plan is sound and is compliant with National Planning Policies and the London Plan. It is less of a courtroom setting, but a round table discussion where interested parties, such as SDCV, are invited to clarify issues raised by the Inspector. An Examination process can take between 6 months and 6 years. It depends on the number of questions the Inspector raises and whether additional information or changes to the Plan are requested.

We understand that over 10,000 submissions were made, a very significant number for a fairly technical process. However, once the submission had been made and the Council published the list of submissions on its website, it was soon noticed that over 1,000 submissions appeared to have disappeared. This was immediately brought to the attention of the Planning Inspector's Programme Officer. The Council was asked to investigate and it has removed the documentation from its website and is currently adding the missing submissions before the Submissions and Comments document is republished. Not a particularly good start to the process.

The submissions that were made focus strongly on the loss of Green belt land and the tall building policy that would involve the potential for tall buildings at Palmers Green and Southgate. SDCV submitted comments on both these issues and have asked to be represented at the Examination when the Inspector invites interested parties to take part in the process. The opportunity to meet the Inspector is likely to take place in early 2025.

DEVONSHIRE SQUARE, PALMERS GREEN



The Council has decided that the closure of Devonshire Road should be made permanent and the Council's Journeys and Places Team has been working with local groups and the pupils at Laurel Park School to design a landscaped area. The agreed scheme involves brick paving designs created by the pupils demonstrating the history of Palmers Green from the stone age when dinosaurs roamed the area, through the coming of the railway and the suffragette movement to the community activities of the Broomfield Festival and the Community Conservatory and Orchard. Display boards and QR codes will provide information on the local history of the area. It is expected that work to improve the area will start in early 2025.

John West.

ENFIELD LIBRARIES PROPOSED CHANGES HOW DOES THIS AFFECT US & WHAT TO DO NEXT?

What is happening?

Enfield Council are currently consulting on their plans for the Enfield Library Service. With the financial pressures on the Council, they are looking at how to save money and make the library service more sustainable for the future.

You can read about all the plans and the draft strategy here, which also includes links to the draft strategy:



<https://www.enfield.gov.uk/consultations/library-consultation>

The key proposals are:

reduce the number of libraries by **CLOSING** these 8 libraries

Southgate	Winchmore Hill	Oakwood	Bowes Road
Bullsmoor	Enfield Highway	John Jackson	Enfield Island Village

improve and enhance the library service by increasing opening hours by a total of 56 hours per week at:

Edmonton Green	Ponders End	Fore Street	Ordnance Unity Centre
Millfield House	Palmers Green	Enfield Town	Ridge Avenue

retain the home library service and digital library service

Enfield Council say they want to provide a comprehensive, sustainable and efficient library service for people who live, work or study in Enfield.

What do we think?

As a community organisation we are very concerned that this strategy will cause real long term harm and consequences to the residents of this borough. We are particularly concerned about the suggestion to close these 8 libraries.

We have been considering our response to the consultation and spoke to many of you at the Palmers Green Festival and those comments will be included in our response, but please do not hesitate to get in touch with any views.

The main points raised were:

The impact on children who need access to a range of books; what they learn is empowering. Parents cannot afford to provide a wealth of different books.

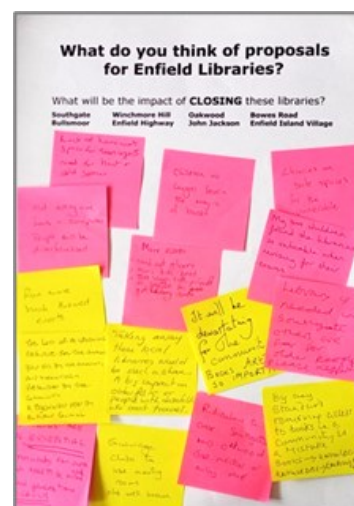
Teenagers need homework space.

Children will no longer be able to learn about the magic of books.

Libraries can be warm and safe places for many.

Not everyone has a computer or is computer literate, so they are excluded from many benefits or access to services. This can have a financial impact.

Not everyone can travel to other libraries. The old and disabled will be disadvantaged.



Clubs run from these libraries may relocate, but the people who go may not be able to travel there.

The libraries that are suggested for closure have good transport links (particularly Southgate which is a transport hub) so can be reached quickly by those living locally.

In the case of Southgate, the library is a part of our town centre. There are many groups, including SDCV who are working hard to improve our town, removing the library would be another blow to its fragile economy.

Southgate Library provides the only public community space. It is used by local politicians for constituency meetings, the local baby health visitor, school visits plus classes. Closing it will take away the real heart of the whole community.



SDCV has been working on a plan to relocate the Minchenden School War Memorial into the library – a space had been allocated. If the library closes, there does not seem to be a suitable alternative in Southgate.

We have members waiting to replant the front, to make it more inviting at no cost to the council. It has been frustrating to keep pushing this plan back. It shows how important and well regarded the Southgate library is to this community.

What could the libraries do better?

Run more book themed events.

Run community events.

Advertise their services better – some people reported that they thought Southgate library was still closed!!

The meeting space could be used more if it was clearer what is available. Renting the space would be revenue generating.

Run computer courses to help access to online resources.

Cooperate with local FE colleges and schools.

Provide careers advice.

Provide advice on council services.

Become an information hub on local groups, events and opportunities.

What else? Please let us know your thoughts via info@SouthgateDistrictCivicVoice.org

Statement from new Council Leader

In his statement after becoming leader, Cllr Erbil stated *‘My immediate and main priorities include sustainability, the green agenda, reinvestment in our town centres and creating an environment where all residents can thrive. Tackling inequalities in health and wellbeing, employment and access to decent homes will also be the top of my agenda.’*

The proposed closure of Southgate library does not accord either with his priority of reinvestment in town centres or with Enfield Council's current programme of investment in the regeneration of Southgate town centre. We hope that he will revisit the suggestion of closing libraries as these are key sites to make our town centres thrive, as well as tackling inequality.

Petitions vs consultation

There are various petitions going round and these show the depth of feeling, but it is important that you also **complete the consultation**, because that is what the council will use in determining the final strategy.

Who can participate in this consultation?

Residents of Enfield, people who study in Enfield and people who work in Enfield, representatives of schools, colleges, health organisations, local business, voluntary and community sector organisations, and Metropolitan Police and the London Fire Brigade.

The consultation closes on **14th November 2024**.

You can see the full plan and send your comments to Enfield via:

<https://www.enfield.gov.uk/consultations/library-consultation>

Paper copies of the plan are in the library.

The final strategy will be published in early 2025.

Please send your comments on the consultation to the council.

Jane Maggs

EVENTS TO LOOK OUT FOR



Saturday 26th October at 2.30pm - Autumn Open Meeting

A talk by **Dan Maier: Illuminating Art- from Lampshades to Landmarks - a Designer's Journey**

Walker Hall, 7 Southgate Green

All welcome



Thursday 17th October at 6.30pm - London Forum of Amenity & Civic Societies AGM

The Gallery, Alan Baxter, 77 Cowcross Street, London, EC1M 6EL

After the AGM there will be talks from our SDCV Vice Chair & Civic Voice Trustee **Jane Maggs** and from the London Forum Patron, **Professor Tony Travers** of the LSE, who will talk about the political climate under the new government with reference to planning.

Please register via:

<https://www.londonforum.org.uk/events/annual-general-meeting/>

Wednesday 23rd October 3pm to 8pm - What is it like to live, work or visit New Southgate? Drop-in session. (A collaboration between Enfield and Barnet Councils)

Ladderswood Community Centre, 10A Station Road, New Southgate, N11 1FH



Saturday 7th December – Civic Voice AGM

Foundling Museum

More details to be announced.

HERITAGE GROUP

For many years we held meetings of members to discuss or hear about local history. This started as a group sitting round a table discussing their local history interests and research, and developed into a meeting where invited speakers gave presentations on a range of topics of local and general history.

We used to have five meetings a year, but booking speakers was getting to be hard work and expensive, and meetings were reduced to two a year. Numbers attending also reduced, so the Local History Group meeting was disbanded. It would be a shame to lose the local history side of our society and I wondered whether any members would be interested in re-starting it as a "heritage group", maybe returning to the format of the original local history group, discussing local history subjects and research. One way of doing this would be for the convenor to suggest a topic for the next meeting and members invited to come along and talk about an aspect of that topic. I said "come along", but a venue would be another issue. It's probably not worth paying for the Friends Meeting House again, but there may be other venues available, at little or no cost, or meeting in someone's home. For our group some examples of topics could be "local roads which have disappeared or changed drastically", "buildings we have lost", or "improvements made to our local heritage".

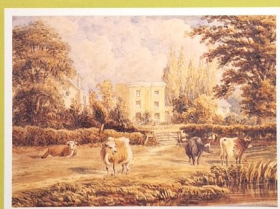
If you might be interested, let us know on info@southgatedistrictcivicvoice.org, or ring me on the number shown on the front page

Colin Barratt

THE CRESSWELLS OF WINCHMORE HILL

The Cresswells of Winchmore Hill

A Gifted Victorian Family



Peter Hodge

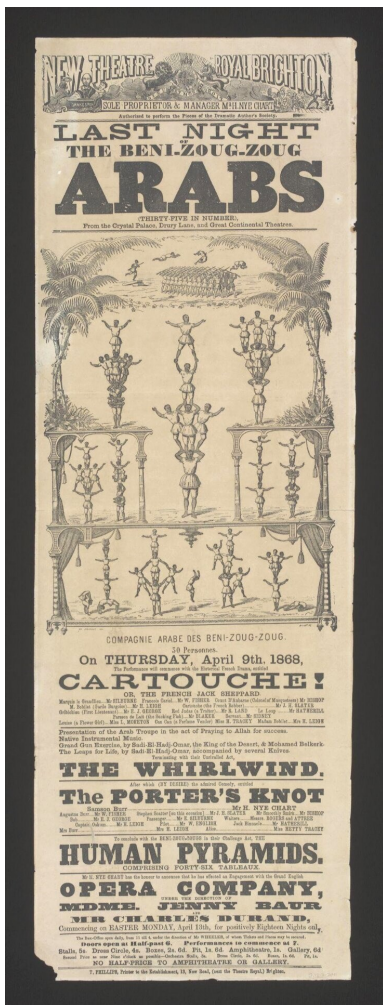
The late Peter Hodge arranged a reprint of Henrietta Cresswell's *Winchmore Hill: Memories of a Lost Village* (1912) in 1982 (when we were known as Southgate Civic Trust) and the commemoration of her house at 16 Station Road with a local blue plaque in September 2000.

Peter also wrote an excellent biography of Henrietta and her relatives, *The Cresswells of Winchmore Hill: A Gifted Victorian Family* (1999) which is available on the SDCV website shop page for £5 but we have decided to offer free copies at the open meeting on 26 October, along with bargain prices for most of our other publications (as well as reducing the online prices of some of them). There will also be free postcard sets of 14 local views.

If you can't get to the meeting but would be interested in having a free copy of the book sent to you (with postage and packing added), please enquire at info@southgatedistrictcivicvoice.org

Richard Purver

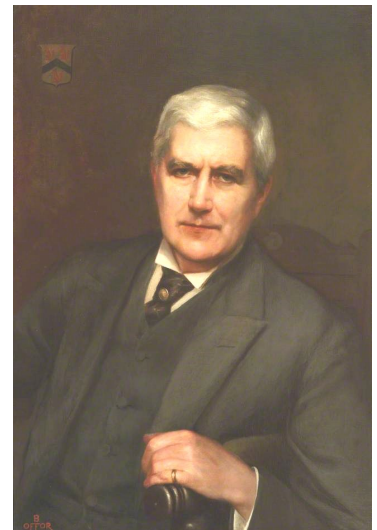
RALPH LITTLER, REV JAMES BAIRD AND THE BENI ZOUG ZOUG TROUPE



The Spring 2024 edition of the British Music Hall Society journal, *The Call Boy* (edited by Geoff Bowden, author of the history of the Intimate Theatre, *Intimate Memories*) featured an article with an interesting local connection, *The Scandal of the Beni Zoug Zoug Troupe* by Alan Stockwell.

The troupe was made up of boys of varying ages who had been recruited by dubious means to perform as acrobats in this country and abroad. Mr RDM Littler QC was visiting Constantinople in 1881 when they were appearing there and after investigating their circumstances, which included being kept in squalid conditions, was able to arrange for several of the boys to be repatriated to England: ‘Dr Barnardo agreed to accept [them] and Littler appealed for contributions to a fund organised by Rev James Baird of Southgate’. In 1882 Littler and Baird became guardians to two of the boys whose father was deemed unfit to care for them.

RDM Littler became Sir Ralph Littler in 1902, having taken up residence at Broomfield House in 1875, where he continued to live until 1901, and was chairman of Middlesex County Council in 1902 when they agreed to pay a quarter of the £25,000 cost required for the purchase of Broomfield Park and house by Southgate Urban District Council. He had previously promoted the separation of Southgate from the Edmonton Board of Health in 1881, which led eventually to the formation of the Borough of Southgate in 1933. As a magistrate he could be formidable, Alan Dumayne stating in *Once Upon a Time in Palmers Green* that ‘Sir Ralph



was always anxious to assist the young offender and was a keen advocate of the Borstal system. He was criticised in the Press, however, for his harsh sentences, usually imposed on convicted burglars, especially the habitual criminal’. One of the two portraits of him in the Middlesex Guildhall Art Collection is by Beatrice Offer, about 40 of whose paintings can be seen at Bruce Castle Museum.

An entertaining article about Ralph Littler from the *Middlesex Gazette* of 28 February 1891 on the Broomfield House Trust website says that ‘If there is one incident in his career the recalling of which gives him particular pleasure, it is the rescue of the “British Beni Zoug Zougs” whom he happened to see at Constantinople, and whose case excited so much attention just ten years ago’.

Reverend James Baird MA was the first vicar of Christ Church Southgate and oversaw the construction of the building, which was funded by the Walker family of Arnos Grove and public subscription and consecrated in 1862. With his wife Anna [née Walker] Baird was a noted local philanthropist and this extended to his part in the rescue of the boys. The tablet in his memory at Christ Church has the inscription ‘Faithful as a preacher, diligent as a pastor, his ready help and care for the sick and aged, with his friendly words, brought hope and comfort to many a shadowed home’.

Images: playbill advertising the last night appearance of the Beni-Zoug-Zoug Arabs at the New Theatre Royal, Brighton on Thursday, 9 April 1868 © Victoria and Albert Museum, London; portrait of Sir Ralph Littler by Beatrice Offer courtesy of Middlesex Guildhall Art Collection via Art UK

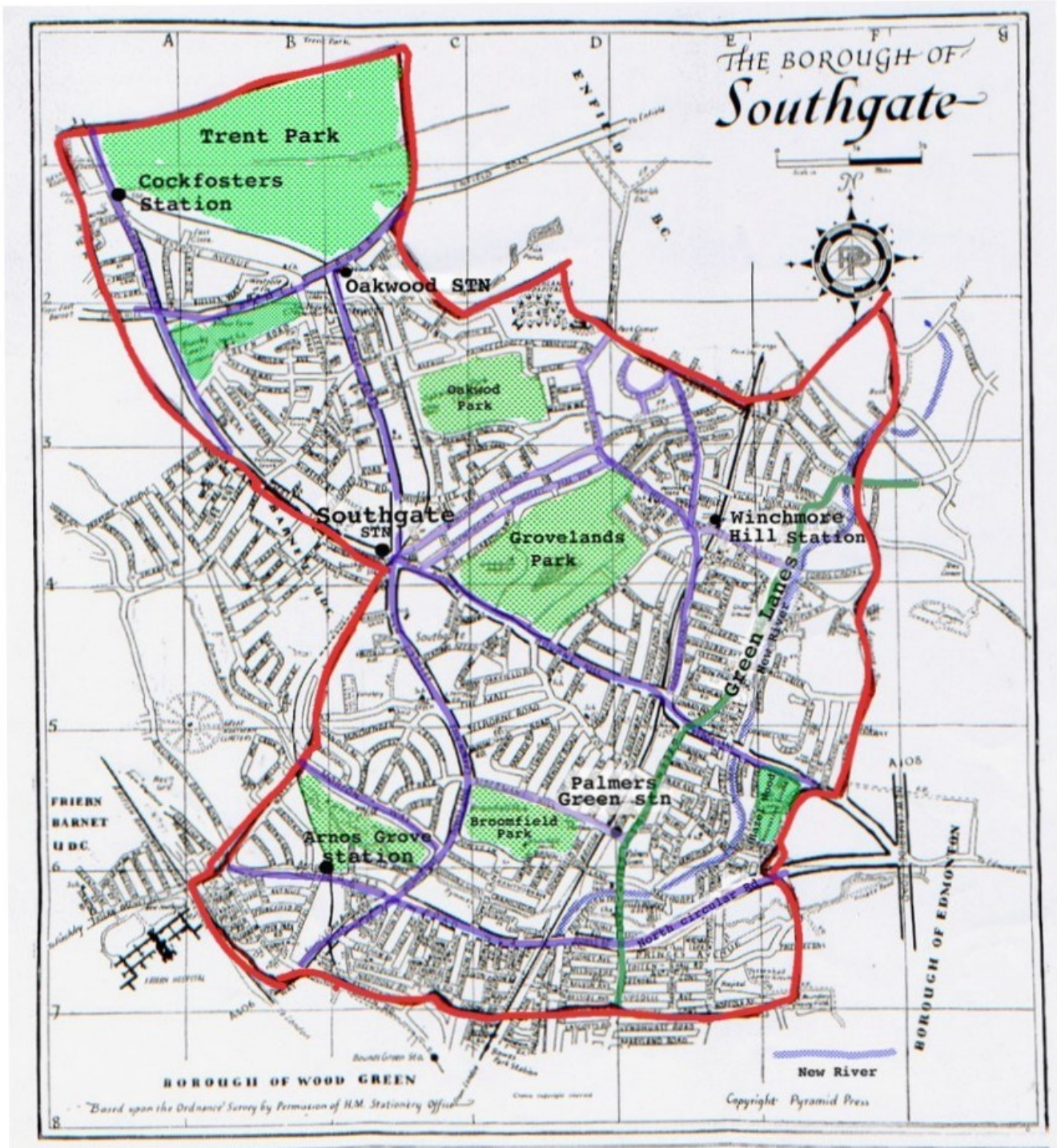
Richard Purver



Southgate District Civic Voice

Our main area of interest

loosely based on the old Southgate Municipal Borough
and abolished in 1965 to become part of the London Borough of Enfield.



Map showing Borough of Southgate pre-1965
From an advert produced for Westoby & Son of Palmers Green

