



Makower Architects

Clapham North Bridge Design Competition Winner Announced

In 2025, the Clapham Society and This is Clapham BID launched a design competition to explore bold and creative ideas for enhancing the railway bridge over the High Street at Clapham North. Marking the completion of Phase 2 of the competition, in June 2026 the judges announced Makower Architects as the winner of the competition leading a team that included contributions from Light Follows Behaviour, CAST, Aspect Studios, Velocity, and Common Works.

As part of the competition process over 2,250 members of the public viewed four shortlisted schemes and voted for their preferred designs. The judges, comprised representatives from the Clapham Society, Clapham Business Improvement District, Transport for London and London Borough of Lambeth. The winning proposal was particularly commended for its placemaking approach, architectural quality, and its ability to connect the bridge, public realm, and wider town centre into a coherent and memorable destination.

The judging panel intends to continue working with the winning team to further develop the concept, incorporating feedback received during the competition process from stakeholders, businesses and members of the public, with a view to further refine and develop the vision before proceeding to seek the necessary funding to complete the project.

Jeremy Keates and John Haworth

Clean Up Clapham Competition

Local schoolchildren have been helping to keep Clapham clean through a poster competition encouraging residents to reduce litter, recycle more and care for the Common.

The competition attracted entries from pupils at Macaulay School, Bonneville School and Eaton House. Eight winners and three runners-up were recognised at a prize-giving ceremony held at the Clapham Common Bandstand in June. Winners received cinema tickets generously donated by Clapham Picturehouse, while runners-up were presented with copies of Nature's Heroes, donated by The Clapham Society.

The winning posters are now being displayed in local shops, cafés and restaurants across Clapham. A selection of the designs has also been produced as a set of postcards, available for £5 from The Clapham Society and participating schools.

Saimo Chahal



Adalie Chalkly-Maber
Year 3 Macaulay School

A Message from the Committee

You will have noticed that your Newsletter has a different look. We've been re-examining the Society's role, to concentrate our focus as the champion of Clapham's built and urban environment and how it fosters a happy and cohesive community. That means we want to conserve the best in our buildings' heritage; promote good design in development; contribute to greening our streets, reducing litter, and any and all initiatives aimed at improving the quality of life in Clapham.

Clapham Common History Lectern Update

Thank you to everyone who has already helped us to raise over £7000 towards this project, however, we still need a further £5000 to fund the creation of 6 new lecterns that tell a concise history of Clapham Common around the Bandstand. This is one of the biggest projects the Clapham Society has undertaken in many years. Every year the Common gets around two million visitors, but many people don't know why it looks the way it does today.

We hope to change that so anyone can stop for a moment and discover the story of the Common. Not only is it very much our remit to promote the heritage of Clapham but there are two other potential benefits to this project:

Firstly, the more people who have pride and a sense of belonging in a place the less likely they are to drop their litter there. And secondly, each lectern will have a barcode that directs the reader to our website, a simple effective way to let thousands of people know what the Clapham Society is and what else we do.

The new lecterns will be made from sturdy black powder-coated steel, designed to resist rust and graffiti — so they should last for decades. This is something millions of people will read over the years so please help us create this legacy of Clapham Common. You can find out more about the project or make a donation on our website.

Michael Barry

Local History: St. Luke's Battersea

In 1874, the Vicar of Battersea, Erskine Clarke, moved an iron church formerly the precursor of St Mark's, Battersea Rise, to what he later called 'a picturesque corner' of the Old Park estate, a site he had purchased earlier that year. By 1881, the steady increase in nearby houses meant that its services became full to overflowing and a new church was needed.

His Bishop felt the community had had enough of Gothic churches 'with their difficult acoustics and expensive ornamentation' and suggested a basilica. His proposal was accepted and F. W. Hunt was commissioned to produce its design.

Iron church in the late 1870s



St Luke's in 1904

The chancel was completed by the end of 1883, the nave by 1889, and the tower finished in 1899, St Luke's becoming a parish in its own right the next year. Its hall had opened earlier when the church was only half built and was soon extended to hold up to 350 people. It was heavily used for wider community purposes including a girl's gymnastic society, a cycling club, and a whist drive with 180 players.

St Luke's had a relatively wealthy congregation, many of whom contributed to a richly decorated interior over a period of thirty years. St Luke's was an early adopter of electricity; the Parochial Church Council appointed its own honorary electrician, a selling point in his local advertising. Electroliers, based on a design by Benvenuto Cellini in the Pitti Palace, were introduced in 1903 and have recently been restored. Music has always played an important role in church activities, and its good acoustics are enjoyed by both a local choral society and audiences for its very successful music society.

Timothy Walker

The Orangery - An Update

Readers may recall a short article in the Newsletter last October about the collapse of the roof over the Orangery, the Grade II listed 1793 remnant from Thornton House, off Worsopp Drive behind the Notre Dame Estate. The structure is in the care of Lambeth Council Housing department but was fenced off and long neglected. Our item provoked an acerbic feature in the "Nooks and Corners" section of Private Eye magazine, a first for our Newsletter! In response to an enquiry, Lambeth told the Eye that Lambeth's current "severe financial challenge" meant that external funding would have to be found.



Sinclair Johnston



Sinclair Johnston

Lambeth have since had discussions with the London Buildings Preservation Trust but without apparent resolution to date. Despite this, in the last month, contractors have taken over the site, removed all trace of the original timbers and started to create a new flat roof of unpublished design. Such extensive works would, by current legislation, require Listed Building Consent but at the time of writing, Lambeth have ignored all enquiries despite having told the Eye, "details will be shared with local people once the restoration plan is finalised."

The Society will continue to pursue the case in the hope that the site may eventually have some beneficial use rather than being fenced off and neglected. The structure is open to view from the surrounding amenity area.

Sinclair Johnston

Who Pays for Parks? Financing Clapham Common

All local authority services are facing increasing financial pressure, and Lambeth Council's support for Clapham Common is no exception. While councils are legally required to provide services such as social care, parks and open spaces are not statutory services, making them particularly vulnerable when budgets are squeezed. Against this backdrop, the Clapham Society recently took part in a Garden Museum event, called *Who Pays for Parks?*, bringing together local authority officers and community groups to discuss how parks can be funded and managed in the future.

Two themes emerged. First, there has to be some reliance on commercial activity. The challenge is deciding what type and scale of activity is acceptable before it begins to undermine the features that make our parks valuable. On Clapham Common this income comes from events, cafés, and sports facilities. Across Lambeth's parks, commercial activities generated around £1.8 million in 2025/26 towards a total parks budget of £16 million. Not all income generated on the Common is spent there - the Common and Brockwell Park are where most of the money is made, but Lambeth has more than 70 parks and green spaces to maintain. However, 20% of income from events on the Common is allocated to a Parks Investment Levy, which helps fund improvements such as paths, signage, biodiversity projects and other enhancements to the Common itself.

The second theme was the growing importance of community involvement. Clapham Common provides an excellent example of what can be achieved when local groups work alongside the council. The Friends of Clapham Common and Wild Clapham have raised more than £400,000 through grants and donations, while volunteers contribute countless hours to planting, litter-picking, habitat creation and environmental projects.

The recent withdrawal of plans for a World Cup Fan Zone on the Common was welcomed by many locals. Yet it also highlights a question that parks across London are increasingly having to confront: if we want to preserve and improve valued public spaces, how much commercial activity are we prepared to accept in order to help pay for them?

Michael Barry

Anna Jefferson-Smith 1937 - 2026



It was a good day for Clapham when over sixty years ago Anna, a young nurse from the area, met a fast-stream entrant to the civil service, Peter, who'd moved here. The Jefferson-Smiths moved into the house in Iveley Road where they were to spend the rest of their lives and bring up their two daughters. When Lambeth Council attempted to compulsorily purchase the old terraced houses and replace them with new build, Anna and Peter were at the forefront of opposition from what the Planning Inspector described, in his eventual decision, as "a well-integrated community living happily and neighbourly". The campaign resulted in the homes being protected as a Conservation Area, releasing support for much-needed improvements.

While working as a nursing sister in an operating theatre, Anna could take on the most intimidating consultant if she needed to and, as the Clapham Society's representative for the Common, everyone knew she would raise their concerns - usually communicated while she was out walking one of a succession of rescue dogs - with the Council. But it was volunteering for Ace of Clubs, among the street homeless, where, she told me, she felt she was where she really should be. After Peter's death, a stroke rendered her almost housebound for several years but her interest in what was going on in the area never ran out.

Alison Macnair

We Need You

We're looking for more trustees to get involved. Everyone is welcome, though we are particularly keen to get people with experience of architecture and planning, or admin skills. Please get in touch for a no-obligation chat: vicechair@claphamsociety.com.

Coming & Going

There continues to be plenty of change on Clapham's high streets. Iceland has closed with Aldi taking over the site and the former Nationwide branch is destined to become yet another Gail's. The Apollo Arms in Old Town has closed following the collapse of its parent company and Dentons has moved from Clapham North. We also understand that the former Russian Ballet School premises in Clapham Manor Street are set for a rather different future as the home of a luxury sporting gunmaker. If you hear of a notable arrival, departure or change of use, do let us know.

What's on in Clapham - July & August 2026

Bandstand Concerts Return For Summer

Free live music returns to Clapham Common throughout July and August. This year's programme includes jazz, salsa, brass bands, choirs and orchestral performances. Concerts take place every Sunday afternoon, with an additional Bank Holiday concert on Monday 25 August.



The Fabulous Honeys

Clapham Society Walks

Join us on 2 August for our popular walk exploring the history of Clapham Common. Led by experienced local guides, Society walks offer a fascinating way to discover more about the area's history and heritage.

Clapham Society Talks

Our talks programme resumes on 21 September when a group led by Mike Tuffrey will present *Clapham in 1815: Saints, Sinners and the First Dads' Army*. The meeting will be held at Omnibus Theatre.

Opera at Trinity Hospice

On Thursday 13 August, Rogue Opera brings *Saving Violetta* to the gardens of Royal Trinity Hospice. This inventive adaptation of Verdi's *La Traviata* promises an evening of music, drama and humour in a unique outdoor setting while supporting the hospice's work in the local community. Tickets and further information are available from the Royal Trinity Hospice website.

Venn Street Market Green Day

Green Day returns to Venn Street Market on 11 July. A highlight is the Clapham Leaf Club Grand Finale, when local schoolchildren sell vegetables, flowers, baked goods and other produce they have grown or made as part of the programme. The event raises funds for participating schools and gives pupils the opportunity to experience life as market traders for the day. Alongside this, the Market's flower stall will be holding a garden plant sale

Other Events

Summer highlights also include St Paul's Opera's production of *La Traviata* and Studio Voltaire's Open House. See the calendar for dates. The exhibition of work by Konrad Mägi at Dulwich Picture Gallery continues until 12 July. At the Garden Museum the exhibition *Benton End: A Paradise of Pollen and Paint* runs until 20 September. The Clapham Model Yacht Club holds Sunday sailing sessions on Long Pond, where children can borrow model yachts for no charge.

Grassy Knoll - Volunteers Wanted

The Clapham Society has "adopted" the green space outside Clapham Common underground station. So far we've planted over 2000 daffodils and we regularly meet to pick up litter and water the shady garden and the five newly planted hawthorn bushes. We are working with Clapham Business Improvement District and the Lambeth Parks team to see what more we can do to improve this "gateway to Clapham," but in the meantime we could do with a few more volunteers to keep the space clean and green over the summer. If you would like to join the small WhatsApp group of volunteers then please email michaelbarry@claphamsociety.com.

Dates for Your Diary

July

- 2-4 St Paul's Opera: *La Traviata*
- 4 Studio Voltaire Open House
- 4 Clapham Common Litter Pick
- 5 **Bandstand Concert – Brass United Social Club**
- 11 Venn Street Green Day & Plant Sale
- 12 **Bandstand Concert – All Saints Concert Band**
- 18 Clapham Common Litter Pick
- 19 **Bandstand Concert – Los Domingos**
- 22 Arts Society visit to Pope's Grotto
- 26 **Bandstand Concert – King Groovey & The Horn Stars**

August

- 1 Clapham Common Litter Pick
- 2 **Society Walk – History of Clapham Common**
- 2 **Bandstand Concert – Real Voices**
- 9 **Bandstand Concert – South London Jazz Orchestra**
- 13 Trinity Hospice Opera - *Saving Violetta*
- 16 **Bandstand Concert – Lambeth Wind Orchestra**
- 22 Clapham Common Litter Pick
- 23 **Bandstand Concert – Tequila Brass**
- 25 **Bank Holiday Bandstand Concert**
- 30 **Bandstand Concert – Centre Stage**
- 31 **Bandstand Concert – South London Symphonic Winds**

Looking Ahead

- 21 Sep **Society Talk - Clapham in 1815**
- 19 Oct **AGM & Talk - Speaker TBA**
- 16 Nov **Society Talk - Local Music Hall**