## Palace and Hurlingham

Curving around the south-western riverside of the borough: from Wandsworth Bridge half way to Hammersmith Bridge, is the Palace and Hurlingham ward.

This is possibly the strangest ward in the borough in one respect: it cobbles together at least three distinct and physically separate neighbourhoods. These areas have one thing in common - and it is the reason this ward exists: they are all very strongly Conservative. Indeed, by 1998, the old Palace ward was comfortably in the top ten safest Conservative wards in London.

Palace was one of the new wards created in the 1978 boundary changes, taking the southern half of the oldest iteration of Crabtree ward and combining it with Hurlingham east of Putney Bridge, which came from Parson's Green ward.

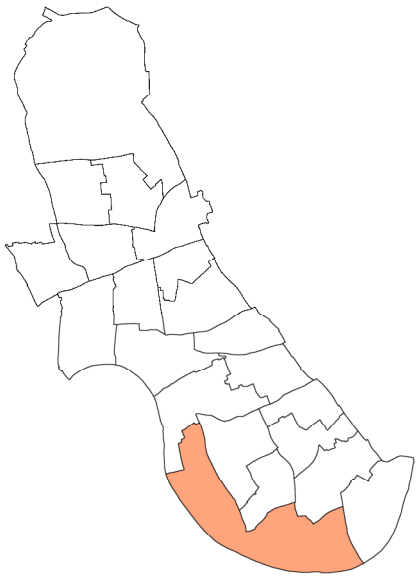
The southern half of Crabtree and the Hurlingham chunk of Parson's Green were the very strongest Conservative areas in each of their respective wards, so combining them created an impregnable Tory ward in Fulham. There weren't any of them before 1978.

Labour wanted such a ward because it drained Conservative votes from more competitive surrounding areas. Crabtree was meant to become a safe-ish Labour ward after it lost half of the Bishops Park estate. It didn't work out quite that way but, without the boundary changes Labour would never have got close. Not in 1986, not in 1994 and not in 2018.

Eel Brook was also meant to be a reasonably safe Labour ward, taking the northern half of the (somewhat outrageously drawn) Parson's Green ward and leaving out Hurlingham. But Eel Brook too went Conservative in 1978.

But the new Palace ward did become a sink of Conservative votes: 71%Tory in its first election of 1978; as much as 83% in a 1987 by-election.

There are a few scant pockets of resistance to the Conservatives in this ward - slightly more since the boundaries changed in 2022. The Robert Owen House estate off Fulham Palace Road, which was built on the old St John's House prison, is the largest. There is Swanbank Court, a sheltered housing block by Putney Bridge.



And now there is the large Sulivan Court estate: which isn't all that strongly Labour anymore and doesn't turn out to vote with much energy either; plus Philpott Square at the end of Peterborough Road, and some riverside housing association blocks in Carnwath Road.

There have always been two core components to Palace ward: the Bishops Park estate and Hurlingham. But until the new boundaries took effect in 2022 it had never been possible to combine all of both of these distinct neighbourhoods together.

The Bishop's Park estate is the northern section of the ward: a grid of long terraced streets sometimes known as the alphabet streets because they are named alphabetically: Bishops Park Road, Cloncurry, Doneraile, Ellerby, Finlay, Greswell, Harbord, Inglethorpe, Kenyon and Langthorne. After that they get a bit mangled, going Q (Queensmill), L (Lysia) and N (Niton).

Bishops Park Road is a street of mansion blocks - atypical of the rest of the estate, overlooking the tennis courts of Bishops Park. The remainder of the grid comprises semi detached houses; the larger ones constructed as single homes in the south while those in the north were custom built as flats.

This neighbourhood includes Fulham Football Club's Craven Cottage ground in Stevenage Road, the curving, ziggurat brown-brick 1970s River Gardens development and then a series of mainly - not exclusively - small council

estate cul-de-sacs that run north along the riverside beyond the end of the Bishops Park estate. These started out in Crabtree, transferred to Palace in 2002 and then moved to Fulham Reach ward in 2022.

Fulham Football Club has been a huge political issue in this area for decades, with the fate of Fulham Palace and the maintenance of Bishop's Park not far behind.

The football club was established long before the Bishop's Park estate was built in the 1920s and 1930s. When the estate was far more economically diverse the interaction between the club and the residents was generally smooth. But as Fulham house prices soared - with this area becoming among the most expensive in SW6 - the character of the estate changed.

Far fewer immediate neighbours were now Fulham Football Club fans and the inconvenience of being unable to access homes on match days because of road closures led to vocal unhappiness.

Wildly exaggerated claims were made that Fulham fans - among the most civil football supporters around - were defecating in front gardens and vandalising the neighbourhood.

There were proxy issues such as the impact of fans causing wear and tear of Bishops Park as they walked to and from Putney Bridge tube station, the lack of a Thames Path through the club's grounds and the blight of huge coaches carrying the football squads manoeuvring around narrow residential streets.

These gripes in turn led to blanket opposition to virtually every significant planning application the club submitted to modernise facilities and increase capacity. And because Palace ward had Conservative councillors amplifying the sense of grievance, the fate of Fulham Football Club became a party political issue.

There was a strongly held view among the diminished but still large army of club supporters in Fulham that choosing to move to an area with a major football club and then ceaselessly campaigning to (as they saw it) force the club out of that area was a somewhat outrageous thing to do. As most Fulham fans were working class, long term residents, the party more likely to embody these views was Labour.

The comparative strengths of these campaigns and counter campaigns ebbed and flowed.

Fulham went through one of its lowest patches from the late 1970s to the mid 1990s, plummeting to the (then) Fourth Division, lucky to scrape crowds of more than 5,000 a match, its ownership in the hands of property speculators with no instinctive loyalty to the club, holding land worth many millions. If the club could be shunted elsewhere (a ground share - indeed, a full merger at one point - with QPR in White City being floated endlessly) or

**FULHAM CHRONICLE, DECEMBER 21, 1939**

## NEW HURLINGHAM WARD COUNCILLOR

### Retired Indian Army Officer

As we announced last week a retired officer of the Indian Army is to join the Municipal Reform opposition members of the Fulham Borough Council. He is Colonel Charles Temple Morris, 87 Rivermead Court, Hurlingham.

The vacancy on the Council was created by the death of Councillor H. Dodimead. By reason of the arrangement for a political truce during the war, there will be no election. The agreement dictates that any vacancy occurring on the council by death shall be filled by the party to which the deceased member belonged. Colonel Morris will, therefore, be unopposed.

Colonel Morris has lived most of his life in India. He comes from a distinguished military family and was wounded in Lucknow.

After serving with the Yorkshire Regiment he was transferred to the Indian Army in 1900. During the Great War he served on the North West Frontier and in [unreadable] and was three times mentioned in dispatches.

### Awarded C.B.E.

In 1922 Colonel Morris was awarded the C.B.E. for meritorious service. On his retirement from the Indian Army in 1931 he was selected to the Government of India for appointment as Army Minister to the Nawab of Rampur for two years.

Colonel Morris has been a member of the West Fulham Conservative and Unionist Association since he took up residence at Rivermead Court on coming to England in 1930. He is chairman of the West Fulham Conservative Campaigners' Corps and vice president of the Fulham Branch of the British Legion.

"I am anxious to render all the service I can on the Borough Council" the colonel told one of our reporters. "I had a great admiration of the conscientious service rendered to Fulham by the lat Councillor Dodimead and I hope to emulate his splendid record.

just wound up, these indifferent, guzzling owners were sitting on a goldmine.

The prospect of no more football on this side of Fulham pleased many of the Bishops Park estate residents while distressing those who wanted to safeguard the club from the rapacious ownership of Ernie Clay, who left the club deeply in debt, and Marler Properties who bought it off him.

When Labour regained the council in 1986 they attempted a compulsory purchase of the club. Farcically, this ended up being opposed by the club, then headed by Jimmy Hill, who for some reason preferred a bung of £5 million to leave the ground for good but keep the club itself alive - somewhat like Wimbledon F.C. being relocated to Milton Keynes.

The council's Compulsory Purchase Order was blocked by the government which led to something of a stalemate as the council had no intention of granting any permission to plans that would have redeveloped the ground. Meanwhile the owners failed to invest in the club, so Fulham seemed doomed to a tenuous existence at the bottom of the football league, awaiting a Conservative council that would permit the sell-off.

Fulham was saved when the club was bought by Mohammed Al-Fayed in 1997, whose investment turned its fortunes around, taking it rapidly through the ranks to the Premiership. It was now the turn of local residents to complain about plans for new stadia and luxury apartments.

When the club proposed to provide a Thames Path on a slight overhang over the Thames, concerns that rowers and sailors might be trapped underneath the cantilevered structure and drown became raucous. It seemed to those wanting Fulham to attain long-term security that only plans that led to the club's departure were supported by residents.

This was a ferocious political battle locally led by opposing community groups: the Fulham Alliance (anti the stadium redevelopment and dominated by Bishops Park estate residents) and Fulham United (pro-stadium, dominated by Fulham fans from far and wide, and especially backed on the riverside council estates).

Both groups fought to get the most submissions in to the council, for or against, to challenge or justify the local



NEWS 3

# Labour bids £20m for Fulham ground

**TOWN HALL chiefs voted to buy an ailing soccer team's ground for an estimated £20-million.**

**Ruling Labour councillors agreed to make a compulsory purchase order for Craven Cottage, the home of Fulham Football Club, where property developers want to build houses.**

**But amid rowdy scenes in the council chamber on Wednesday night, they were accused by Tories of taking risks with ratepayers' money. The council's leaders were warned:**

- **The sale of land for housing may not cover the costs of buying the whole of Craven Cottage.**
- **The owners may be able to sue through the European courts because planning decisions have devalued their land.**
- **It may prove difficult to find a developer willing to join the Town Hall in creating the housing, football and leisure complex proposed.**

**Conservative leader Peter Prince warned: "This crowd who cannot even run the Town Hall properly suddenly think they are going to be experts on football."**

THE GAZETTE
Friday, February 19,1993



Sport

# The battle for Craven Cottage

**The threat to Craven Cottage has been a long, drawn-out affair, much of it unknown to fans and much of it confusing. *Chris Hatherall* sheds light on what has happened so far.**

FULHAM'S problems at Craven Cottage (right) began in earnest in May 1986, when chairman Ernie Clay sold his interests in the club to Marler Estates for £4m.

Marler (who became Cabra Estates) already owned Chelsea's Stamford Bridge and the new Fulham chairman was David Bulstrode.

Despite a promising start he stunned fans in February 1987 by announcing plans to merge the club with Queens Park Rangers and develop the Craven Cottage site.

Those plans have since been scuppered by Hammersmith and Fulham Council's refusal to grant planning permission, and a dogged determination by everyone at Fulham to stay put.

Former player and television pundit Jimmy Hill began the survival plan by forming a consortium of supporters, and he took over from Bulstrode as chairman in April 1987.

In a bid to save the club from extinction, the future of Craven Cottage at this stage took second place to the future of Fulham FC.

Hill struck a controversial and complicated deal which saw Fulham accept money from the ground's owners in return for a promise that Fulham would leave the Cottage.

The club were to receive £1m when they left the ground and a further £5m if the owners were granted planning permission. In return, Fulham agreed not to give evidence at a public inquiry and not to support a compulsory purchase order called for by the council.

In the end the deal never came to fruition because Cabra Estates soon got into financial difficulties, and their creditors, the Royal Bank of Scotland, took over the freehold. However, the Fulham board are still gagged by a legal requirement not to talk publicly on the issue and this has left many fans in the dark.

Whilst chairman Jimmy Hill has worked tirelessly behind the scenes to keep Fulham at Craven Cottage, most of his actions and most of the discussions have had to go unreported.

The Gazette, Cottage Pie and Fulham fanzine, There's Only One F In Fulham have tried to keep fans informed.

But there have been just as many inaccurate and confusing reports in national newspapers and on television for fans to deal with.

Now the issue has come to a real head. The Royal Bank of Scotland must decide very soon what to do with Craven Cottage, and Fulham's lease runs out for good in three months time.




Negotiations have stalled between the two sides, and despite Chelsea's success in recent weeks a deal looks no nearer.

Public pressure could be the final spark needed to change that, and Fulham 2000 is all about creating that spark.

planning justifications for the expansion and to dominate local media coverage.

It is a measure of how every inch of give on this issue was hard fought over that it took thirty years from when new stadium plans were first floated for the Eric Miller (riverside) to finally be rebuilt, with that infamous walkway overhanging the Thames. Already there are complaints - well founded or vexatious - that the entertainment facilities in the new stand breach the peace of the neighbourhood.

South of the Bishop's Park estate is Bishop's Park itself, the Fulham Palace Meadows allotments - one of the largest allotment areas in inner London - and Fulham Palace: the residence of the Bishops of London until 1973. When the bishops vacated the Palace it was let to the then Labour council in 1975 on a 100 year lease.

The plan was to open a museum, cultivate the gardens - which extend back to All Saints Church - and generally conserve the most significant ancient monument in Fulham.

However, there was no money to pay for the renovation and upgrade works or, to put it another way, Labour had more urgent priorities for capital investment like building council homes. The Palace began to deteriorate significantly and, when the Conservatives won control, they attempted to offload the Palace: to sell the lease to a private buyer.

Along with attempts to sell off the Fulham Court council estate in Fulham Road, the closure of Fulham Baths without any replacement, and the intent to sell off of Fulham Town Hall (not realised until another Conservative administration came along after 2006), this

## Town hall wants help to turn crumbling former bishop's home into conference centre

# A palace fit for kingpins of business?



**Fulham Palace, the former home of London's bishops, as seen after rebuilding work in the second half of the 18th century, necessary after years of neglect**

Home to the bishops of London for the past 1,000 years, Fulham Palace now needs private funds to restore it to working order. **COLIN KEATINGE** reports

**TOWN hall chiefs are seeking a private sector partner to help turn crumbling Fulham Palace into a conference centre.**

The historic palace in Bishop's Avenue, which has been home to more than 100 bishops of London in the past 1,000 years, is presently leased to Hammersmith and Fulham Council by the Church Commissioners.

Now, 23 years into the 100-year agreement, the palace is costing the council more than £100,000 a year and much of it is in a state of disrepair.

John Putnam, chairman of the Fulham Society and an advisor to the Fulham Palace management board, said: "A very large amount of money needs to be spent to get the building in good order.

"The upper floor is virtually unusable at the moment. The old facilities, toilets and kitchens would have to be upgraded and there is a problem with the drainage."

A £4.3 million bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund is no longer being pursued because it was found to be "unrealistic".

An independent charity called the Fulham Palace Trust was set up in 1990 to restore parts of the building and run the Museum of Fulham Palace, which is housed in the main buildings.

All with their part to play, the trust, council, and Church Commissioners have to work together to find ways of making the palace solvent.

Using the private sector to provide top conference facilities for groups of 100-150 in the secluded grounds and palace would be one option.

Deputy for environment and contract services, Cllr Michael Cartwright, said: "We are looking to go into a partnership with some sort of organisation that would be able to run the palace for conferences, retreats, that sort of thing."

Cllr Cartwright did not deny the trust might be sidelined if it opposed proposals put forward by the council.

He said: "We're obviously very keen to come to an agreement with them.

"I'm afraid they're going to have to be rather more successful at making money than they are at the moment."

Deputy leader of the Tory opposition and palace ward Cllr Emile Al-Uzaizi said: "The genuine worry is that if we bring in the private sector then that may exclude many local people."

Another option is leasing two 19th century lodges at the entrance to the palace grounds or moving the museum from its present site in the main building.

John Rylance, chairman of the palace trust, said: "There needs to be space for education functions and exhibitions. My hopes, and the trustees', are for a viable and successful future for the palace."

## Undeniably important, but historically neglected

THE FULHAM Palace grounds were given to the Bishop of London in 704 by the Bishop of Hereford, who apparently hoped the present would help "to purge the guilt of his sins".

A building was not constructed on the site until more than 300 years later. The first reference to a Bishop of London living there comes in the 12th century.

The grounds have often been more carefully tended than the house. A committee including the renowned architect Christopher Wren was appointed in 1715 to report on the dilapidation of the palace. However the building was not properly repaired and in 1749 it was found to be in a dire state.



**The courtyard of Fulham Palace in 1798**

Medieval parts of the palace were knocked down in the 1760s and towers and battlements added. These were later demolished, along with a brewery that fermented the bishop's tipple until early in the 19th century.

Bishop Mandell Creighton opened the palace grounds to the public early this century and regularly entertained more than 70 people at weekends. In 1973, when Bishop Stopford retired, the palace ceased to be used as a residence. The Grade I listed building was leased by Church Commissioners to Hammersmith and Fulham Council in 1975 for 100 years. The gardens, which are included in the English Heritage Register of Historic Gardens, were opened to the public one year later.

In 1987, after consulting residents, the council reported: "The palace and its grounds are of local, regional, national and international importance." Despite that it has been largely neglected and, apart from occasional functions and a museum which was opened in 1992, continues to be under-used.

● We are grateful to Historical Publications for the use of pictures from *Fulham Past* by Barbara Denny.

was a huge image problem the Tories created for themselves in the lead up to the 1986 council elections.

They regarded themselves as, by now, the Party of Fulham, yet here they were trying to flog off Fulham's crown jewels. The damage the Fulham Palace sell-off plan did to the Conservatives was significant, especially among their most staunch supporters - though not really sufficient to lose them too many votes in Palace ward.

It was the Labour council elected in 1986 that began the long path of restoring the palace and its grounds, opening the museum and making some tentative steps to addressing the decades of underinvestment.

In the late 1990s the palace won National Lottery heritage funding to fully address the needed works: the restoration of the walled garden with its curving greenhouse; to lay out the gardens properly; the recreation of some of the moat, new premises for the museum; and to make the palace estate financially sustainable.

This whole area of open space physically separates the Bishop's Park estate from the other neighbourhoods in this ward.

Residential development begins again at Fulham High Street. There is the imposing Parkview Court mansion block on Fulham High Street and a much more recently built development: Bishop's Gate, built on a former council depot. There are the medievel-feeling cul-de-sacs Church Gate and Steeple Close by All Saints Church.

Then, across the other side of Putney Bridge there is Swanbank Close sheltered housing, the end of Fulham High Street, gated-off Carrara Wharf, which was built on a former stone yard just beneath the railway bridge, and Ranelagh Gardens.

Under the railway brige we move into Hurlingham proper.

Hurlingham was a vast estate leased, then sold, by the Bishop of London to a succession of affluent individuals who built a "cottage" and later a villa somewhat similar in architectural style to the US White House. The owners allowed a variety of activities to take place on their land and, as this lovely spot leading down to the river grew in popularity, it was eventually turned into a private members' club: The Hurlingham Club.

Until the Second World War the club owned a vastly bigger slice of Hurlingham than it does now. The whole of Hurlingham Park was their Polo Field No.1 while the site of Sulivan School and the Sulivan Court council estate was their Polo Field No.2. During the war, these grounds quartered several military battalions and large chunks of the polo fields were turned into allotments to help with rationing.

After the war the London County Council sought to compulsorily purchase the entire Hurlingham Club site because, while Fulham had a supply of ornamental public parks, greens and commons, there was no recreation space in the south of Fulham. The demand for very much better housing for the working classes was loud before the war and infinitely louder after it.

And, despite Fulham being historically a district of market gardens, there were no allotment sites either until the Polo pitches were commandeered - the Fulham Palace allotments had not been designated such at that point.

Public open space was especially important as, in the main, the homes the LCC and borough councils were building were flats without private gardens. A rapidly expanding population desperately needed recreation grounds.

Such a vast acreage in south Fulham enabled a long list of social needs like these to be fixed. The borough council even aspired to turn Hurlingham House into a youth centre.

But the Attlee government would not allow so radical a plan: the club almost certainly had members and other advocates within the civil service and political ranks lobbying for it. Instead, the LCC had to settle for the two polo pitches. The Hurlingham Club cooperated with the appropriation of so much of its land to ensure it retained enough space to survive - indeed thrive.

This is a great example of how utterly different political values were then compared to today.

Immediately after the war it was deemed essentially patriotic for the State to seize vast tracts of private property to provide amenities - housing, recreation and healthcare - for the whole community to benefit from.

Today, not only would such a seizure from an exclusive elite institution like the Hurlingham Club be unthinkable but we see councils of all political persuasions across London gifting council estate land to developers to build private housing: the literal reverse of what happened in Hurlingham. Municipal-isation versus privatisation.

Back then the two sides in the council chamber were divided only on whether the borough should build Sulivan Court using its own workforce (the Labour preference) or contract the work to existing local builders (the Conservative position).

But Hurlingham is far more than its club, and the land the councils procured from it.

Hurlingham proper comprises two distinct types of housing. Three huge mansion blocks dominate the riverside: Hurlingham Court - one block a fairly ugly and atypical 1960s 9-storey block, the other an elegant and ornate red brick building that would not look out of place in South Kensington.

Next door is the overbearing 1930s art deco Rivermead Court, three eight storey blocks set around a courtyard. Eminent residents have included Lord Fowler,

# Hurlingham playing fields victory

**Ten weeks after the first intimation of his ideas on the proposed compulsory purchase of Hurlingham Club and grounds by the L.C.C. Mr. Lewis Silkin, Minister of Town and Country Planning, confirmed the Order with modifications that constitute victories for the club and playing fields.**

Sixty acres were wanted by the L.C.C. for playing fields, an amenity park and riverside promenade. The Minister has said "Yes" to playing fields, authorising the L.C.C. to buy 20 acres (No.1 polo ground and stables) for that purpose.

But, despite a protest from the borough council and disapproving expressions from the L.C.C., Mr. Silkin has allowed the Hurlingham Club 40 acres of parkland and recreational facilities, plus its riverside walk.

"Hurlingham is some distance from the areas where congestion in Fulham is greatest and open space most needed," states the decision. "For this reason the case for the provision of football pitches and similar facilities is, in the Minister's opinion, stronger than that for an amenity park. Moreover, the evidence given at the inquiry made it clear that it is in space for organised games that the present deficiency is most acute."

## When allotments can be given up

The polo ground and stables are well suited for conversion into playing fields, it is stated, and when the allotments can be given up there should be no difficulty in laying the ground out for games.

Referring to the 40 acres to be retained by the club, the Minister says they consist of a background of well-timbered parkland studded with recreational facilities that are already, at busy periods, inadequate to meet the needs of members and visitors, while the remaining parkland is too cut-up and scattered to absorb or provide relaxation for any considerable number of persons.

It would not be practicable to make more intensive use of the grounds without drastic remodelling of the layout and the consequent sacrifice of their present attractiveness. In the Minister's opinion, the club's extinction would be a loss to London, and at the inquiry the L.C.C. did not suggest a possible alternative site.

## Alternative accommodation

Three properties fronting on to Hurlingham Road have been included in the area to be purchased by the L.C.C. The Minister asks, however, that the council should not disturb the occupiers of these properties, who serve the club, until alternative and convenient accommodation can be provided.

The borough council protested to the Prime Minister and Mr. Silkin that the deprivation of the Hurlingham Club river frontage from public use is a direct divergence from the County of London Plan.

On this question, Mr Silkin's decision states: "The line of the proposed riverside walk has been excluded from the Order as confirmed because the benefit to be derived from so isolated and inaccessible a stretch did not appear sufficient to outweigh the difficulties of construction and the damaging effect of severance from the remainder of the ground. The balance of advantage might, however, be shifted were the proposal revived as part of a wider scheme to open up the river front."




former Speaker of the House of Lords and Health Secretary in Margaret Thatcher's government; and, aptly enough, Lord Weatherill, former Speaker of the House of Commons from that same era.

There is one other huge modernist tower block across the road: Napier Court - again entirely out of keeping with the neighbourhood it's set in. These high density, imposing mansion blocks are one aspect of Hurlingham.

Another aspect is traditional Fulham terraced streets of varying scale and grandeur. The streets south of Hurlingham Road comprised larger houses not dissimilar to, and built around the same time as, the Bishops Park estate: Napier Avenue, Edenhurst Avenue, Hurlingham Gardens and Ranelagh Avenue.

Between Hurlingham Road and New Kings Road the houses are somewhat less imposing, but only by degrees. with a mix of very much sought after Parson's Green fringe streets like Linver and Alderville Roads and more tightly packed terraces squeezed around the District Line railway viaduct - roads like Foskett, Ewald and Grimston. There is also a huge orange Italianate stucco villa in Hurlingham Road occupying a plot that stretches all the way back to Bettridge Road.

It is common in built-up London for once-distinct districts to merge into each other as undeveloped land was built upon and the gaps between neighbourhoods disappeared. Hurlingham is a clearly identifiable, distinct and long-established neighbourhood of Fulham. But so too is Parson's Green and they blend together. Broomhouse Road - part of Hurlingham, is just across the New King's Road from Parson's Green itself.

Where is the boundary between the two? The streets north of Hurlingham Road were in the incohate Parson's Green and Walham ward until 2022. Before that they were in Palace. Before that they were back in a Parson's Green ward. And before that they were in Hurlingham ward.

## Conservatives hold Palace ward

# Sweeping victory for the Tories

By NICK HOPKINS

**YOUNG Tory Andrew Ground steamrollered all the other candidates for a resounding by-election victory.**

The 25-year-old was 1,000 votes clear of his nearest rival for Palace Ward when the result was announced on Thursday night last week.

His Liberal Democrat opponents, who caused fury by calling the by-election in the height of summer, stood firm behind their decision and claimed they had never expected to take the Tory stronghold.

Mr Ground, a marketing executive with Procter and Gamble, polled 1,280 votes last week. Behind him were Labour candidate David Dunwoody with 215 votes and the Liberal Democrat hopeful David Jacques with 111 votes. There was a 41 per cent turnout.

Fulham MP Matthew Carrington was one of the first to congratulate the new councillor after the count at Fulham Town Hall.

Mr Ground said: "Obviously I am delighted to have won. This is the first seat I have contested and it is nice to be representing an area where I have lived all my life. The main issues in Palace I will be concentrating on are the parking problems and the future of Fulham Football Club. We have big problems at the moment because commuters are parking in residential roads. Many people cannot park outside their own homes because of this.

"And if Fulham FC is to close then I will want to make sure any redevelopment is a sympathetic one to the needs of local people."

Councillor Ground takes over the duties of the late Lady Belhaven, who died in February.

The Conservatives had hoped to wait until the autumn to hold the by-election to replace her but the Liberal Democrats stepped in and demanded a summer date.

Councillor Ground commented: "By convention we should have been allowed to call the by-election. They showed a lack of respect for Lady Belhaven. I think they were trying to catch us on the hop. Calling for a by-election on the Thursday before the summer bank holiday must be the worst time in the year because so many people are on holiday."

But defeated Liberal Democrat David Jacques dismissed the claim: "There was not a low turn out for the by-election. We did not expect to win the seat – not this time anyway but we made the Tories work hard for their victory."

This inability to define the area is inherent in these repeated boundary changes.

The area east of Hurlingham Park has several different identities, again including Hurlingham. Is the Peterborough estate: the ladder of "Lion Houses" on the south side of New King's Road Parson's Green, or Hurlingham, or Sulivan? Is South Park Hurlingham or Sulivan? What about the southern, originally industrial, end of Broomhouse Lane and Peterborough Road: Hurlingham or Sulivan?

What's Sulivan? It is one of the growing list of former Hammersmith and Fulham wards: the area between Broomhouse Lane and Wandsworth Bridge Road, and New King's Road and the river. But it's more than just an archaic, arcane ward name. Much of the area was acquired by the Sulivan family who lived in Broom House, just by Parson's Green.

The Sulivan family's wealth came from the East India Company. They were major benefactors to local good causes. Locally they founded the Ray of Hope Coffee Club for Working Men - one of those paternalistic efforts by the wealthy to divert the working poor from the vices of pubs and alcohol. This establishment eventually became another exclusive private members club: The Parson's Green Club and, like Hurlingham, a large proportion of its grounds were thereafter purchased by the LCC to build Hurlingham and Chelsea Secondary School.

The Sulivans were also benefactors to St Dionis Church, Parsons Green and the gothic Elizabethan Ragged School for Children with Tuberculosis - which later became the Castle Club on the corner of Daisy Lane. Although the building certainly looks like it might date from the first Elizabethan era, the name on this occasion refers to Elizabeth Sulivan who was the younger sister of Prime Minister Lord Palmerston.

This is an atypical Fulham neighbourhood. It was one of the last to be developed so its architectural styles are far more modern and its laid out more like an outer London suburb rather than densely-packed inner London. Until the war pretty much everything west of Peterborough Road was either undeveloped or large factories and warehouses; and in the middle South Park prises each of these blocks of land apart.

There are bits: Daisy Lane, Peterborough Road and Sulivan Road built in the rural arts and crafts movement cottage-style houses.

**Summary of results for Palace and Hurlingham ward**

| | Con | Lab | LD | Grn | Oths |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Hurlingham ward** | | | | | |
| **1900** | 63.9 | | 36.1 | | |
| **1903** | 60.0 | | 40.0 | | |
| **1906** | 73.8 | | 26.2 | | |
| **1909B** | 59.1 | | 40.9 | | |
| **1909** | 68.9 | | 31.1 | | |
| **1912** | 68.8 | | 31.2 | | |
| **1912B** | 65.5 | | 34.5 | | |
| **1919** | 49.5 | 34.1 | | | 16.4 |
| **1922** | 73.8 | 26.2 | | | |
| **1922B** | 74.6 | 25.4 | | | |
| **1925** | 73.6 | 26.4 | | | |
| **1928** | 73.8 | 26.2 | | | |
| **1928B** | 73.0 | 27.0 | | | |
| **1931** | 84.4 | 15.6 | | | |
| **1934** | 71.3 | 28.7 | | | |
| **1937** | 61.2 | 36.8 | | | |
| **1939B** | Unop | | | | |
| **1945** | 46.8 | 53.2 | | | |
| **1949** | 64.7 | 35.3 | | | |
| **1953** | 54.6 | 45.4 | | | |
| **1956** | 51.3 | 48.7 | | | |
| **1959** | 51.0 | 49.0 | | | |
| **1962** | 49.9 | 50.1 | | | |
| **Parson's Green ward** | | | | | |
| **1964** | 42.8 | 57.2 | | | |
| **1968** | 64.7 | 35.3 | | | |
| **1971** | 44.8 | 55.2 | | | |
| **1974** | 52.4 | 47.6 | | | |
| **Palace ward** | | | | | |
| **1978** | 71.5 | 21.9 | 5.0 | | 1.7 |
| **1979B** | 69.2 | 25.2 | 8.4 | | 4.5 |
| **1982** | 69.3 | 15.6 | 15.1 | | |
| **1986** | 63.2 | 22.1 | 9.8 | 4.9 | |
| **1987B** | 83.2 | 12.3 | 4.5 | | |
| **1990** | 69.9 | 19.1 | | 6.6 | 4.4 |
| **1992B** | 79.7 | 13.4 | 6.9 | | |
| **1994** | 69.4 | 20.6 | 10.0 | | |
| **1998** | 73.0 | 17.3 | 9.7 | | |
| **Palace Riverside ward** | | | | | |
| **2002** | 68.1 | 19.8 | 12.1 | | |
| **2006** | 45.3 | 9.7 | 5.9 | | 39.1 |
| **2010** | 63.0 | 15.6 | 21.4 | | |
| **2014** | 61.8 | 18.4 | 6.9 | 12.9 | |
| **2018** | 62.1 | 23.8 | 14.1 | | |
| **Palace and Hurlingham ward** | | | | | |
| **2022** | 44.7 | 21.6 | 14.9 | 14.0 | 4.8 |
| **2026** | 46.3 | 17.6 | 13.0 | 13.8 | 9.3 |

Hurlingham Square, on the corner of Peterborough Road, is a 1980s gated-off post-modern development and stands on the site of a paper factory.

The Piper Building was built on the site of a concrete works and was originally constructed as a laboratory complex for British Gas; its ornamental tile mosaics are now listed.

The Philpott Square council estate was built on an engineering works; the private Broomhouse Dock estate in Carnwath Road and the adjoining public housing stand on a chemical plant supplied from the river; and the most recent new housing blocks across Carnwath Road from Broomhouse Dock called Higham House were warehouses for construction materials suppliers.

This is, essentially, a new neighbourhood with some way still to go before it is settled. Most of the river-side of Carnwath Road that was once warehouses has been cleared and is now undergoing the sort of high-rise apartment block redevelopment that has transformed Sands End riverside and that of Wandsworth across the Thames. There is also a new public space by the riverside where one of the entrance shafts to the Tideway Tunnel - the super-sewer running beneath the Thames to stop waste flooding into the river when it rains heavily.

Finally there are the streets clustered south and east of South Park. The streets south of the park are smaller, more tightly packed cottages with a couple of inter-war tenement council blocks - Carnwath House and John Dwight House (named after Fulham's most famous potter).

The roads in the "V" between the park and Wandsworth Bridge Road: Settrington, Ashcombe, Beltran and Narborough, are larger and in the far more common Fulham style; Edwardian bay-fronted terraces.

There is also Clancarty Road which is an eclectic mix of many kinds of housing styles including the horse-shoe shaped private tenement block called Brightwells, which stands on part of the estate of John Tamworth, privy counsellor to Elizabeth I.

Politically, as with so much of Fulham, this Sulivan area is polarised and fairly evenly balanced. In the red corner are Sulivan Court, Philpott Square, Carnwath and John Dwight Houses and the public housing by Broomhouse Dock. In the blue corner: the majority of voters in the terraces and the ever-growing private residential estates.

There are more voters on the council estates than in the rest of the area for now, but this doesn't give Labour the edge, because the estates - especially Sulivan Court - vote in lower numbers than the streets.

The Conservative disaster that was 2022 did not leave Palace and Hurlingham unscathed. Of course they won the ward easily but their vote fell almost twenty points. The Sulivan section of the ward was pretty dismal for the Conservatives but so too was the Bishop's Park estate - at least by recent standards.

In 2026 the Conservatives did quite a bit better, though still by historical standards poor - they were still a distance below 50% of the vote, for example. But they did increase their vote, which wasn't the case in the majority of the borough. And Labour fell back so the Conservative majority increased to almost 30%. Reform also failed to make any headway. In the sense that no part of this borough is good hunting ground for that party, it isn't surprising.

But perhaps it might also be expected that the demographic profile of parts of Hurlingham - especially the huge riverside blocks, might contain slightly more older, more right-wing voters who could become Reform supporters. Maybe not. But the fact the Conservatives increased their share despite 9% going to Reform is impressive.

Palace and Hurlingham is both an unwieldy ward covering almost three miles along the Thames from Wandsworth Bridge to Crabtree Wharf; but it also couples together two whole, reasonably well-defined neighbourhoods that have similar demographic and political outlooks. There will be no political upsets in a ward like this. But the Tories have a long way to go to restore their vote to the heights it reached in the 1980s and 1990s. That may actually not be possible on these boundaries - but intrinsically Palace and Hurlingham should be at broadly the same level as its neighbour: Parson's Green and Sandford,

# Rollcall of Palace and Hurlingham ward councillors

including Palace Riverside ward (2002-22), Palace ward (1978-02), Parson's Green ward (1964-78) and Hurlingham ward (1900-64)

**2026**
- Aliya Afzal-Khan
- Amanda Lloyd-Harris
- Jeremy Maddocks

**2022**
- Aliya Afzal-Khan
- Jackie Borland
- Amanda Lloyd-Harris

**2018**
- Donald Johnson
- Amanda Lloyd-Harris

**2014**
- Marcus Ginn
- Donald Johnson

**2010**
- Marcus Ginn
- Donald Johnson

**2006**
- Donald Johnson
- Minnie Scott-Russell

**2002**
- Emile Al Uzaizi
- Amanda Lloyd Harris

**1998**
- Emile Al Uzaizi
- Andrew Ground

**1994**
- Emile Al Uzaizi
- Andrew Ground

**1992B**
- Andrew Ground

**1990**
- Emile Al Uzaizi
- Lady Rosemary Belhaven

**1987B**
- Peter Hopkins

**1986**
- Emile Al Uzaizi
- Richard Hoddinott

**1982**
- Richard Hoddinott
- Stuart Leishman

**1987B**
- Lucinda Winter

**1978**
- Andrew Jackson
- Stuart Leishman

**1974**
- Andrew Jackson
- Barbara Leishman
- Stuart Leishman

**1971**
- George Dimmick
- Hugh Duff
- Susan Hall

**1968**
- John Akerman
- Patrick Ground
- Anne Partridge

**1964**
- Hugh Duff
- Ian Jordan
- David King

**1962**
- Hugh Duff
- Birtle Little
- John Wilkinson

**1959**
- Laura Mills
- Alan Watkins
- Wilfrid Watson

**1956**
- Stuart Leishman
- Laura Mills
- William Parsons

**1953**
- Stuart Leishman
- Laura Mills
- William Parsons

**1949**
- Stuart Leishman
- Laura Mills
- William Parsons

**1945**
- Charles Boaden
- Margaret Lancaster
- Joseph Ward

**1937B**
- Charles Temple Morris

**1937**
- Herbert Dodimead
- Thomas Harper
- Arthur Moore

**1934**
- Herbert Dodimead
- Thomas Harper
- Arthur Moore

**1931**
- Herbert Dodimead
- Thomas Harper
- Arthur Moore

**1928**
- Herbert Dodimead
- Arthur Moore
- Edward Pritchard

**1928B**
- Thomas Harper

**1925**
- Herbert Dodimead
- John Faulkner
- Edward Pritchard

**1922**
- William Brooks
- James Littleboy
- Edward Pritchard

**1919**
- William Brooks
- James Littleboy
- Edward Pritchard

**1912B**
- William Brooks

**1912**
- Herbert Dodimead
- Thomas Evans
- John Mobbs

**1909**
- Evan Andrew
- Thomas Evans
- Henry Praegar

**1906**
- Evan Andrew
- Frederick Drew
- James Littleboy

**1903**
- Evan Andrew
- Frederick Drew
- James Littleboy

**1900**
- Arthur Dabbs
- James Littleboy
- John Mobbs