



<http://www.swlondoner.co.uk/richmond-park-deer-face-dangers-other-than-culling/>

Richmond Park deer face dangers other than culling

Summary:

Park-goers have to accept some responsibility for around 15 deer deaths a year.

By Ros Satar

Richmond Park visitors are being warned of the dangers facing deer in the darker winter months of the year.

Although November is heavily associated with the culling season of the Richmond Park deer park-goers have to accept some responsibility for around 15 deer deaths a year.

Between October and February five or six deer are killed in road traffic accidents in the park, normally at dawn or dusk where visibility is still low.

Despite numbers falling since the introduction of a 20mph speed limit, deer hit by cars are rarely killed outright, and often die later from their injuries or have to be put down.

Discarded litter also kills around five deer a year.

Small items of plastic can cause a slow death, despite litter pickers working in the early hours of the mornings before the park opens.

Any sudden deaths in the herd are given post-mortems and objects like rope, string, dog-waste bags, other plastics and clothing have been found recently.

Around six young deer are killed by dogs in their first few weeks when they are hidden away by their mothers as they search for food.

They are unable to escape, and are brought down by dogs and fatally mauled.

The rutting season, just before the November cull, claimed the lives of two senior stags who died from their wounds after fighting.

This year's cull was preceded by a protest in Kingston on 5th November, with animal lovers asking why alternatives cannot be found to control the deer population, such as relocation to other woodland, or contraception.

Last year some of the herd were relocated to Windsor Great Park in the hope that few animals would need to be culled this month.

A spokesperson for The Royal Parks said: "If the cull did not take place then deer would eventually suffer as a result of overcrowding and malnutrition, leading to starvation and death.

"There are no contraceptives licensed for use in the UK.

"These techniques are still in the experimental stage in both Europe and the USA and there are concerns that contraceptives introduced through food and not consumed by the deer herd would impact negatively on other species."

Culling is not done indiscriminately and is carried out by trained marksmen who target a balance of ages across the herd.

The Park's Wildlife Officers constantly move through the herd throughout the year in jeeps, so they are used to their presence.

Richmond Park continues to be an attraction for many locals and visitors to the area. A Park Diary which provides information about culling can be found at the Friends of Richmond Park website: <http://www.frp.org.uk/>



<http://www.swlondoner.co.uk/end-of-the-world-exhibition-set-to-open-in-battersea/>

End of the world exhibition set to open in Battersea

Summary:

The second in a series of five exhibitions will be held at Battersea's the gallery on the corner from 1st March.

By Ros Satar

The second in a series of five art exhibitions opens in Battersea on 1st March containing powerful themes about end of the world theories.

The exhibition is being held at the gallery on the corner and will present works from a range of artists.

The exhibitions are being staged around London, with the final one scheduled for the predicted end-of-the-world date of 21st December 2012.

Lili Phelouzat, Curator and Project 2012 Co-Founder, explains: "The invited artists will be providing many different types of art.

"Pop Art, Taxidermy, photography, video, and big-scale prints."

There are two rooms for the exhibition.

"The first room themes are what we see every day," she said.

"The second room will be more intimate, feel more personal."

On Saturday 3rd March the winner of the 'Scenes of the Apocalypse' writing competition will be announced.

Reverend Nemu will be performing readings, followed by a performance from EcoTort Theatre.

The exhibition runs from Thursday 1st March, with a private viewing, concluding on Sunday 4th March.

Further details about Project 2012 and this exhibition can be found at:
<http://project2012exhibition.blogspot.com/>



[Troubled Tolworth Broadway set for much-needed improvement](http://www.swlondoner.co.uk/troubled-tolworth-broadway-set-for-much-needed-improvement/)

<http://www.swlondoner.co.uk/troubled-tolworth-broadway-set-for-much-needed-improvement/>

Summary:

Tolworth Broadway is a busy dual carriageway, with a central reservation and barrier, with shops either side.

[By Ros Satar](#)

There is a simple statement about the 2012 Olympics road-works restrictions delaying a much-needed urban district regeneration project, on the Kingston Council website.

However, it belies the fractiousness beneath.

At the heart of this ill-feeling is a long neglected traffic and retail black-spot, on the outskirts of Kingston-upon-Thames.

The regeneration is a joint initiative with Kingston Council and Transport for London, as part of the Mayor of London's *Great Outdoors* Initiative, to improve public spaces.

In February, I attended the Council scrutiny panel meeting, five hours of council infighting, and residents' frustrations.

Councillors baited each other, self-important urban designers lectured us, and we heard baffling details of traffic modelling that told us it was a busy road at peak times, as if this would come as a surprise.

Yet no-one disagrees that Tolworth needs attention.

Tolworth Broadway is a busy dual carriageway, with a central reservation and barrier, with shops either side.

It is a spur off the busy A3 trunk road and leading to its more prosperous shopping neighbourhood in Kingston.

The proposal is to remove the barriers down the middle of the Broadway area, and introduce a central island, known as the 'Greenway'.

The central barriers currently control where pedestrians can cross. The Greenway will allow people to cross the road at any point they choose, although formal crossing points will be introduced.

The kerb will be dropped and a '*Shared Space*' environment will be created, where cyclists, cars, and pedestrians co-exist in 'Shared Space'.

Urban designers believe a 'philosophy of behaviour' takes over, and as road users use the more informal layout, their behaviour is controlled by natural human interactions and due consideration.

The central barriers were put there for a reason, after accidents and a fatality as cars come off the busy A3 and drop from 50mph to 30mph.

Former council member Douglas Reynolds remembers the decision to put up the central barriers in the first place.

As chairman of the road safety commission at the time, he remembers there were a number of accidents and at least one fatality leading up to the installation of the barriers in 1969.

Mr Reynolds said: "The justification was based on at least one fatality.

"It was always a dual carriageway and people were crossing at any point.

"There was no crossing at all."

He had not heard of anyone dying after the barriers were installed and has been actively voiced his opposing opinion at any public meetings on the subject.

Another former councillor, Peter Grey, also feels the decision is flawed.

Mr Grey said: "Even though reducing the speed to 20mph gives better braking speed, it just needs one person to be speeding to cause an accident.

"All it will take is for one person (god forbid) to get killed."

The urban design consultants believe central promenade area in the centre of four traffic lanes promotes pedestrians and cyclists having equal priority, with cars (apparently) naturally slowing down.

Opposing councillors viewed this sceptically, to say the least.

But what of those people who rely on raised kerbs to try and live their lives as normally as possible?

Speaking with the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, they note that in similar environments, most pedestrians tended to extend their route to use the “courtesy crossing points” rather than crossing “naturally” at their nearest point.

Mike Woolston, Guide Dogs’ Mobility Team Manager covering Tolworth, said: “Shared streets, where kerbs are removed and people and cars share the same space, are extremely dangerous for pedestrians with sight loss.

“Our research has found that shared surfaces affect the safety, confidence and independence of blind and partially sighted people.”

Tolworth resident, Bridgette Walker, had been invited to the panel as a witness.

She had expected the questions to focus on whether it was safe or would add to congestion and was left feeling disillusioned about the councillors’ objectives.

All was to no avail, as the sitting council voted to continue with the plans, despite the latest rounds of petitions to the scheme.

The democratic process of calling-in the decision, in the name of transparency has delayed the project further.

The Mayor of London has imposed a planned road-works ban on main road networks during the Olympics, and the council has a similar policy in the run-up to Christmas,

The works will not start now until early 2013, and troubled Tolworth will just have to wait a little longer for its controversial new lease of life.

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<http://www.swlondoner.co.uk/foster-care-appeal-for-battersea-s-stigmatised-staffies/>

Foster care appeal for Battersea's stigmatised Staffies

Summary:

Battersea Dogs and Cats Home today launched an appeal for short-term foster carers as it prepares for a surge of unwanted dogs.

Image:

By Ros Satar

Battersea Dogs and Cats Home is appealing for short-term foster carers, as it prepares for the traditional surge of unwanted dogs in March.

The Home believes that the increase is fuelled by those no longer wanting to care for pets received as Christmas presents.

While the dedicated team, including many volunteers, work very hard to care for the dogs on site, some get very distressed by life in kennels.

Volunteer Manager Carly Whyborn explains: "That's where our foster carers step in and help change the dog's life by giving it one-to-one love and attention in a home environment.

"It can make them happier and more relaxed, which makes it easier for us to find them a new home."

In 2011, Staffordshire Bull Terriers (Staffies) made up 37 per cent of the Home's intake, and the average stay until they are re-homed is 63 days.

This gives the Home important information on how the dog will behave in a normal home environment.

Many know that the Home prides itself on being the only charity that will not turn away any type of dog, but maybe fewer people are aware of its continual lobbying and appeals.

Last November, the Home launched an appeal specifically to change the misconception of Staffies.

Operations Manager Claire Porteous said: "Any dog, regardless of breed, can be trained to perform undesirable behaviours."

The situation is made worse partly due to over-breeding by irresponsible owners.

She described how dogs are being treated often as commodities, and how they are even offered up as swaps on websites for items such as iPods.

"Dogs come to us when the novelty wears off," she said.

"In some cases you're looking at a 15 year commitment," she added. "People do not look at the longevity of owning a dog."

Ruth Brauer and her partner Paul Hitchen from Putney fostered Jessie, a one-year-old Staffie, in January.

She explained: "We both love dogs but can't own one as we are going travelling next year, so fostering suits us perfectly."

Anyone interested in fostering a Battersea dog, or in the Staffie appeal can visit www.battersea.org.uk/fostering.



<http://www.swlondoner.co.uk/protestors-march-through-kingston-town-centre/>

Protestors march through Kingston town centre

Summary:

Chanting protestors carried banners as national Right to Work protests came to the borough last night.

Image:

By Ros Satar

Chanting protestors carried banners and marched through Kingston town centre as national Right to Work protests came to the borough last night.

The group of around 20 protestors started outside Tesco Express, before targeting McDonalds, Primark, Top Man, Boots and Wilkinson.

Organiser Richard Donnelly, from New Malden, said: "A number of companies have pulled out of the scheme recently, and that's been a victory for the power of protest.

"The crux of the issue is that people have been forced onto Workfare programmes, although the Government denies that they are compulsory.

"People will have to work for six months a year on community work which actually means retail stores and other low paid jobs."

Kingston University student Jenny Watkins, 23, said: "The idea of work experience is that you're gaining from it more than the employer.

"I think people are forced to go to keep their benefits."

GMB Trade Union Officer, Nadine Houghton, 27, was also supporting the protest.

“Work experience implies learning about a job, a degree of mentoring and is usually tied to a wider development programme.”

The protestors unfurled a banner in McDonalds as staff tried to ask them to leave the premises if they were not ordering food.

A number of companies are still listed in the Workfare scheme, ranging from retail stores, fast food outlets, and also includes charities.

Tesco announced that from now on any young person accepted for work experience will be offered a choice to participate in the Government scheme with protected benefits or be paid by Tesco with a guaranteed permanent job if the scheme is completed satisfactorily.



<http://www.swlondoner.co.uk/the-40-something-redundancy-scrap-heap-challenge/>

The 40-something redundancy scrap-heap challenge

Summary:

A look at how redundancy affects professionals over 40 and how the job market is changing.

By Ros Satar

“So, tell me. Why did you leave your last job?”

They came from recruiters, from people interviewing me for a new job, and I had to take a deep breath, and try to put a positive spin on taking voluntary redundancy.

Since 1992, I have put down my roots, settling in Richmond.

Houses get bought, mortgages get paid, you live to your means, and suddenly it all changes.

Dauntingly, the job searching process has changed remarkably over those years.

Dr Deborah Kerslake is a professional coach, based in Kingston upon Thames, and has worked with some of the largest global corporations, who have made their base in South West London.

Companies like BP and GlaxoSmithKline engage her to help advise senior staff who are at risk of redundancy.

“When you are so defined by your job and you lose it, you have to rethink who you are.”

Her approach can be pivotal in helping someone deal with the coming upheaval.

“It’s about overcoming the fear that you are not good enough, and coaching really helps with that.”

“A lot of it is about what they want to do next. A lot of them will choose a change of course,” she says.

“Attitude is absolutely key.”

Cynically, I wondered whether some of the large corporations are using coaching as a measure to encourage staff to leave.

People may identify the reason for their issues, resolve them and return to work, or they might decide it is time to move on.

She said: “I ask them if they are happy with those and they almost always say yes, because it is a hell of a lot cheaper than going through the HR route.”

Joanne Monks was recently made redundant and agrees it is important to take stock.

Ms Monks said: “You’ve lost structure but you’ve not taken the time to think: what do I WANT to do, what COULD I do.

“It is important to recognise that even if you make the conscious decision to leave your job, there will be a period where you will be uncertain of everything.”

She added: “It takes a lot of effort to stay positive and to stay focussed.

“We’re half way through our working careers and it puts a different perspective on things.

“You know what you’ve tried and what you like, and what you don’t like.”

Chris Churchman is an outplacement consultant with 20 years of experience in both the corporate and private sectors.

The first task is to question and understand the psyche of the individual, and how they go about being as effective or as energetic as they need to be.

Mr Churchman said: “It can be a very raw experience, so to win them over can be a challenge.

“Sometimes people are cluttered and need to clear out their system, for example things at home which need to be sorted, financial issues which need to be taken care of.”

In my case, I almost felt obliged to take the first full-time offer than came along while progressing with my plans to retrain.

“There are very compelling reasons why people will go down that route,” said Mr Churchman.

“It is a common approach to think: I’m taking it, it’s there.”

Some companies grade employees’ access to coaching and outplacement by levels of seniority.

However one London recruiter is trying to ‘give-back’ to the industry by providing practical job-seeking advice.

Sarah Cooper has over 14 years of experience, and wants to help people understand how they can approach the market more positively, again focussing on attitude.

Ms Cooper said: “The problem is we’ve stopped recruiting for potential in the last four or five years.

“Candidates have nothing to lose, hirers have everything to lose.

“If they get it wrong, the cost and implication for that department is huge.”

The sheer volume of applications cripples the recruitment process, hence the practice of recruiting by rejection.

She says: “We find the few, rather than attracting the many.”

However candidates still tend to carry a lot of history when meeting recruiters.

Ms Cooper added: “When you have just been made redundant, you need to talk to friends and get that out of your system.

“When you come to a recruiter, you need to present that as a fait accompli.”

There is a common theme of attitude.

Dr Kerslake concludes: “That is the trend you see – people who are achievers, once you get over the hurdle of the disbelief and the hurt, they will achieve again.”

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