



## **MANIFESTO for Richmond**

**The Richmond Society cherishes the special character of Richmond and strives to preserve and enhance everything that makes it a wonderful place in which to live, work and play.**

We love Richmond, its heritage of fine buildings and beautiful open spaces, and we wish to ensure it is worthy of the love of those who come after us.

As a riverside resort distinguished by location, history and unique features, Richmond should offer superior amenities.

We believe

- People should feel a sense of community engagement and civic pride as an incentive to influence authorities and effect change necessary to thrive, prosper and improve their quality of life
- High standards of town planning, new buildings and works to old ones, landscaping, infrastructure and street furniture should make a positive and sympathetic contribution to the character of the town's built environment and architectural integrity. We do not assume that everything old is good and everything new is bad. We believe visual design matters and spaces and buildings should enhance and preserve Richmond's distinctive character and blend with the surroundings and historical context in a way that adds to the beauty and diversity of the townscape
- It should be clean, uncluttered, and in a good state of repair with an adequately funded programme of regular maintenance and an appropriate allocation of toilets accessible to the public

- Redundant or unnecessary signage and other street clutter should be removed and bus stops should be located to maintain convenience, but not where they cause pavement congestion
- A-boards and tables and chairs should not be positioned where pavement width would cause them to pose a hazard to pedestrians, in particular those less mobile or visually impaired
- The natural environment should be respected and improved sensitively and sustainably, and its responsible use encouraged
- The distinction between formal spaces, historic and ornamental gardens, amenity grassland for sports and events, and rural spaces should be maintained
- Biodiversity in parks and open spaces with suitable planting and mowing regimes should be supported and enhanced. New planting schemes to mitigate climate change and pollution should be encouraged
- The Arcadian Thames should be preserved by resisting any further commercialisation of the riverside by retail or hospitality businesses. Traditional riverside activities such as boat building should be supported
- The high street model that formerly sustained the local economy is no longer appropriate and the retail sector needs to adapt to changing lifestyles and priorities. If the town is to prosper retailers need to come to terms with a new paradigm of online shopping that competes with experiential in-person shopping in a distinctive urban centre promoted as a desirable place to visit. Landlords of commercial premises and the local authority should recognise this and adjust rents and business rates to levels that are more affordable. The old order of department stores, chains and multiples that made one high street resemble another is no longer relevant for making a town centre attractive. It is boutiques and smaller, specialist shops operated by independent traders which add charm and give Richmond its unique identity. A strong foundation for this exists in the town's historic pedestrian alleys

- Applications for alcohol licences should be considered in a way that allows the night-time economy to flourish whilst preserving the integrity of the Licensing Authority's Cumulative Impact Policy, which seeks to reduce alcohol-related anti-social behaviour by limiting the increase and expansion of licensed premises in the Richmond Cumulative Impact Zone
- Richmond should develop its profile as a picturesque destination of choice that is culturally rich, commercially competitive and adopts the principles of the ten-minute neighbourhood - a place where people feel happy to be and where the arts, culture, entertainment, hospitality, sport, leisure and social facilities can be enjoyed without the need to travel far from home
- People should be able to go about their business in safety, security and confidence that police resources, including a dedicated town centre team and a permanent base, are active, visible and commensurate with known threats of crime, anti-social behaviour and disorder
- The volume of non-local through-traffic should be reduced by diversion from the town centre to alternative routes that can accommodate the volume of vehicles without causing harm to residential areas. Measures that respond to changing patterns of movement and modes of transport should not be detrimental to the safety of pedestrians, whose needs must take priority.

To achieve all this and more we will engage with other stakeholders including the Council, business and residents' organisations, who are all represented within the membership of the Society. We will work with them and where necessary make our views known in order to influence authorities for the betterment of the town and the benefit of the people.

The Richmond Society is a registered charity which is wholly independent of any commercial or political interest. Its priority is whatever is deemed best for the town and those who live, work or play in it.

We will

- support the local economy whilst raising awareness of culture, history and heritage, and enhancing facilities for residents and visitors alike
- encourage an active interest in Richmond and its various community bodies whilst providing a focus for our members to meet and socialise
- continue the Society's work of more than six decades to conserve all that is good about the town and its natural and built environment
- campaign against air and other forms of pollution, aircraft noise and any other harmful environmental matters, including the expansion of Heathrow Airport which we believe to be unnecessary and hazardous to surrounding communities including our own
- actively support anything that contributes to the realisation of this vision and oppose anything that might impede it.

These aims are wholly aligned with the Society's charitable objectives. We will do whatever we can to make them a reality so that Richmond can be enjoyed by the next generation at least as much as it is by ours.

*Approved by the Executive Committee of Trustees  
September 2021*

[www.richmondsociety.org.uk](http://www.richmondsociety.org.uk)

Registered Charity 1169079

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#### **PATRONS**

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