

# RIVERSIDE NEWS

FREE

KINGSTON UPON THAMES

JANUARY 2018



## The story of Kingston Riverside

'The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames' – the name captures how important the River Thames and its riverside are to the borough.

At any time of the day, someone is enjoying the riverside; walking, sailing, running, cycling, rowing, strolling or simply enjoying the view from a café table or park bench. The council wants to make Kingston's riverside even better. It wants to improve the quality of public spaces, footpaths and cycleways. It wants to increase activity and events. It wants to create greater opportunities for wildlife. At the heart of the project is the aim of reconnecting Kingston's riverside with the town centre.

Uninviting alleyways will be improved and new connections established so that everyone can access and experience the beautiful riverside that makes Kingston so special. The council is currently consulting on draft proposals which will form a new Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the riverside area. Public consultation runs from **19 January to 19 March 2018**.

Your views are really important to us in helping us to develop a plan for the future of Kingston's riverside, so please get involved.

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# Guiding the future of the Riverside

## What is the Riverside SPD?

Kingston Council has produced the draft Riverside Public Realm Supplementary Planning Document (Riverside SPD) to explore how the riverside can be improved. They have jointly developed a vision for the future and a range of project ideas with the help of local groups and stakeholders. The findings and proposals are explained in the Riverside SPD.

Public consultation on the Riverside SPD runs from 19 January to 19 March 2018. It is very important that we hear from as many people as possible. Whether you live, work, visit or run a business in the borough; this is your opportunity to comment and tell us what you think about the vision and proposals outlined.

Once approved, the Riverside SPD will be an important reference for planning decisions and will also help the council access funding to help deliver individual projects.

All the details on how to find out more and participate in the consultation can be found on:

[www.kingston.gov.uk/Riverside](http://www.kingston.gov.uk/Riverside)



Historic photograph illustrating the popular use of the river boating and leisure activities.

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*The numerous Regattas on the river associated with sailing and rowing add action and life to the river.*

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Feedback from stakeholder engagement, 2016 (above).

## The Arcadian Thames

### The story of the Thames in Kingston

Kingston is an ancient settlement which developed as a self-contained town at an important crossing point of the River Thames. Until the early nineteenth century it was surrounded by great estates and a rural working landscape. The historic role of the landscape in providing identity and separation between individual urban towns and villages along the course of the river can be described as the Arcadian Thames landscape character.

Over the past 250 years, industrial activity and later residential development has led to the conflation of previously distinct urban settlements, separated by working landscapes, with continuous suburban streets between Kingston, Surbiton and Thames Ditton to the south. The verdant riverside landscape that typifies the Arcadian Thames, has in part been lost.

The Arcadian Thames is a phrase coined by the Thames Landscape Strategy, a not-for-profit partnership working with 220 local groups and communities. It describes a vision to promote, protect and enhance the River Thames as an extraordinary treasure for London and aims to create an Arcadian World Heritage Site.

We believe Kingston's riverside should be an equally important component of the Arcadian Thames as its neighbours such as Hampton Court Park and Richmond Park. To achieve this, the Riverside SPD proposes improvements under five vision themes, each of which deal with a different aspect of the riverside's role and character.



Historic images of the passages in the town centre.

# Get Involved

## Share your views on the future of the riverside

Your views are really important to us in helping us to develop a plan for the future of Kingston's riverside. There are many ways to share your thoughts, so please get involved.

### ” Kingston Conversations

**Richard Mayo Centre**

Eden Street, Kingston  
13 January: 11 – 1pm



### Public Drop-in events

**Minima Yacht Club**

48a High Street, Kingston  
31 January: 3 – 6.45pm  
3 February: 10 – 2pm



### Online

[www.kingston.gov.uk/Riverside](http://www.kingston.gov.uk/Riverside)



### Twitter

#MyKingstonRiverside



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For full details:  
[www.kingston.gov.uk/Riverside](http://www.kingston.gov.uk/Riverside)



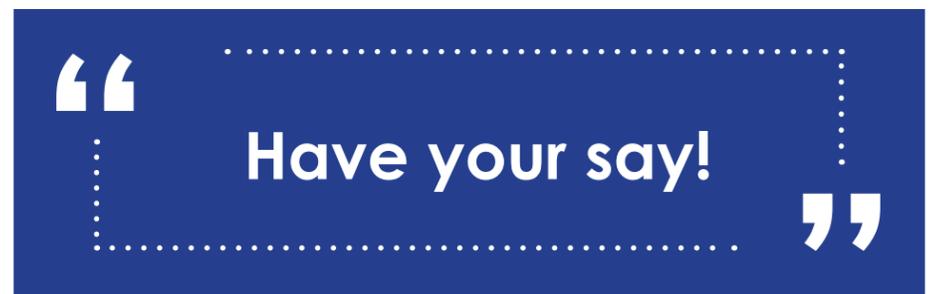
# The Challenge and Vision

## Guiding future development

There is much to improve along the riverside:

- the formal Victorian gardens of Canbury and Queens Promenade are fading and activity could be increased.
- sections of the route are unclear and the public realm is poor quality in parts.
- connections between the Riverside and the historic town centre are weak.
- conflict and congestion between different types of user are poorly managed.

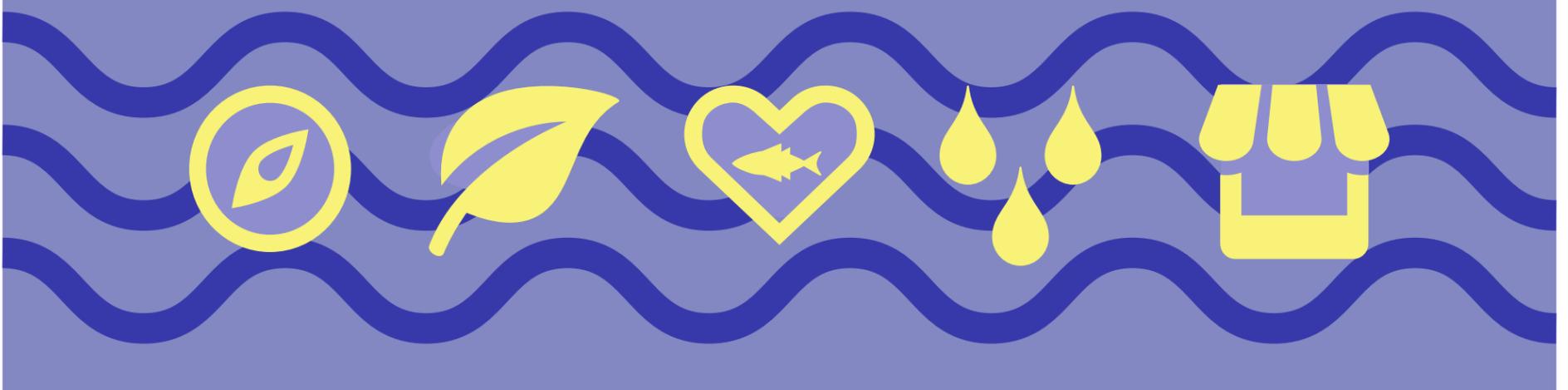
The vision for Kingston's Arcadian Riverside, below, seeks to address these challenges. It is expanded through the following five themes which establish principles to guide future proposals and detailed designs for public spaces along the riverside.



## THE VISION

The vision for the riverside is for it to become a remarkable public space at the heart of Kingston, by continuing its evolution and raising the quality of public spaces. Movement to, from and along the riverside will become an uplifting experience; easier and safer. An expanded range of cultural and sporting events will be accommodated and the qualitative uplift in open space provision will support the growth of the town centre's population. Balanced with this, is a recognition of the importance of providing connected habitats where wildlife can thrive.

Kingston's riverside landscape will become an equally important component of the Arcadian Thames character area as its neighbours, supporting the ambition to create an Arcadian World Heritage Site.



**Does the SPD capture what's important about the riverside?  
Do you agree with the vision for Kingston riverside?**



### 1. Rediscover Kingston's Market Town

- Expand activity to the north of Kingston Bridge
- Improve foot and cycle links between the riverside and town centre
- Promote the increased use of the riverside for eating and drinking, cultural and leisure uses



### 2. Open space and active riverside

- Transform the riverside into a connected, high quality, linear park with a coherent identity.
- Create local destinations which encourage a variety of activities along its full length.



### 3. The river providing a unique culture for Kingston

- Celebrate the role of the river in Kingston's story.
- Increase opportunities for people to enjoy and directly interact with the river.
- Support the use of the river and riverside for sports use and water-based leisure.
- Create an enhanced programme of annual riverside events.



### 4. Making space for water and biodiversity

- Green and naturalise the riverbank to promote wildlife, prevent water pollution and improve water quality.
- Support the wider role of the Thames as an important blue / green corridor.



### 5. Improving connectivity and creating a coherent movement network

- Prioritise walking on the riverside and making more space for people.
- Improve cycling routes.
- Make the links between riverside and town centre easy to find, safe and attractive.

## Kingston Riverside character areas

The character of Kingston's riverside is varied: the urban town centre is bookended by the green spaces of Canbury Gardens and Queens Promenade.

The Riverside SPD explains how the objectives of the vision themes should be applied to each character area creating three distinctive places.

### Canbury Gardens

At the northern end of the Riverside SPD area, Canbury Gardens is a formally laid out public park which runs directly up to the river's edge. It is particularly popular at weekends.

The Victorian pleasure gardens at Canbury are to be reinvigorated, creating a formal park for relaxation and recreation with a naturalised riverbank. The green character of the gardens will be extended south towards Water Lane/Thames side creating a green link towards the town centre.



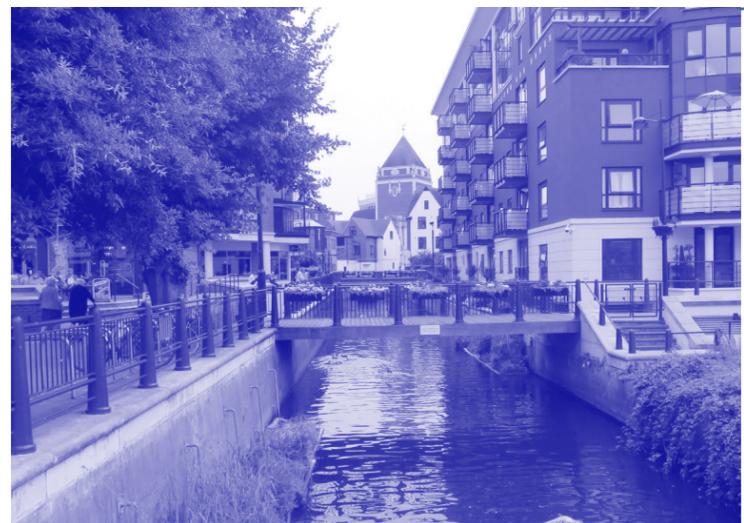
Canbury Gardens looking south (above).

### Historic Wharves and Market Town

The urban character between the rail and road bridges is in sharp contrast with both the green oasis of Canbury Gardens and the vibrancy and fine grained townscape of the town centre river's edge to the south.

To the south of Kingston Bridge, the character of the Riverside changes, and suddenly feels part of the bustle of the town centre with restaurants and café seating spilling out onto the riverside walk.

This central section of the riverside will be an intensively used, urban promenade with improved links to the town's Ancient Market. Food and drink, cultural and heritage uses will be expanded to create activity fronting the riverside walk. Additional space for people will be created by the removal of non-essential activities and the redesign of the riverside walk.



The Hogsmill in Kingston town centre (above).

### Town End and Queens Promenade

At Town End, the southern end of the High Street, the direct built frontage to the river's edge ends, with buildings instead set back behind Portsmouth Road and taking a more suburban character. Here the riverside walk widens and is set with the linear gardens of Queens Promenade.

The southern end of Queens Promenade takes in views to the island of Ravens Ait.

The existing promenade will be redesigned to become a green public park with a natural riverine character. Spaces for new activity will provide interest along the route and long circular walks are to be encouraged with the potential introduction of foot ferry crossings.



Queens Promenade looking toward Ravens Ait (above).



Feedback from stakeholder engagement, 2016 (below).

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*The Victorian heritage of Kingston's riverside is important, with open spaces providing attractive tranquil walking routes.*

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*People who aren't familiar with the town easily get lost and people often ask for directions to the river – wayfinding should be improved.*

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*Town End could be much more attractive and provide an excellent entrance to the town centre.*

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# RIVERSIDE NEWS

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## KINGSTON RIVERSIDE

Connection

Biodiversity

Culture

Open space

Market town



#MyKingstonRiverside

[www.kingston.gov.uk/Riverside](http://www.kingston.gov.uk/Riverside)

Kingston  
Futures



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF  
KINGSTON  
UPON THAMES