

13 November 2020

Dear Friends of Barnes,

Re: URGENT: Barnes Ferry – Harrods Wharf

I don't need to tell you what an inconvenience - a nightmare actually - the closing of Hammersmith Bridge has been for residents, businesses and schools on both sides of the river. According to recent announcements it could be at least a year until bikes and foot traffic will be allowed and over six years before it's fully open. While there are many initiatives being discussed, the one that will be mobilised quickest is the ferry project. This can be started soon and will provide immediate relief to the many thousands of people who need to cross the river daily.

As a Barnes resident and parent, I recently offered the use of the Harrods Wharf, a property I bought this year, as the south-side port for the ferry. I've offered this free of charge to the community for a year, and **I would encourage you to support our recent planning application to the London Borough of Richmond by signing up for updates at www.harrodswarf.com**. This planning permission will allow us to build the south side landing dock, ticketing office, waiting area and toilets which will allow a Ferry operator once approved to swiftly install the pontoons and start taking passengers.

Our planning application does not include provision of the pontoons required for access to the ferries. When a ferry operator has been chosen, it will be responsible for providing pontoons appropriate to its service and removing these after the ferry service is decommissioned. We have purposely kept it this way to prevent restricting certain operators from providing a solution.



You can see more images of what the ferry port will look like at our website, harrodswarf.com. While you're there, please sign up to support our planning application. When the application is live on Richmond Council's website, we will send you the link so you can quickly show your support.

There are alternatives to the Harrods Wharf site, but they involve using a part of the towpath that is prone to flooding, can be loose underfoot and has no facilities or lighting. It is my view that the community deserve a ferry port that enhances its surroundings, re-generates this part of the pathway and has all necessary lighting, access and surface facilities to make it safe for us to use.

A few important points about Harrods Wharf

- Access – access can be along the Thames tow path or through the metropolitan park land at the bottom of Riverview Gardens. The access is of solid high ground, has lighting, stairs and disability ramp access to the wharf.
- The Thames Path – we will be improving the Path for a few meters on either side of the wharf to make a solid connection with the park steps and disability ramp. This section will have lighting.
- Bike storage – We will have a small amount of bike parking for users of the Ferry. The bike storage will be under cover.
- Waiting area – An undercover area with seating will give passengers a dry place to wait for their boat.
- Facilities – We are installing a ticketing office, waiting area and toilets.

Cost – We are providing Harrods Wharf free to the community for the 12 months required to re-open Hammersmith Bridge for foot passengers. Because it is important that the Ferry is not seen as a permanent solution to the bridge's closure, once the bridge has opened the pontoons will be removed and the structure of the Wharf will be re-purposed into an ongoing facility that could include fitness studios, viewing places and a café in the Council permit. We are committed to making this wonderful Thames-side location an integral part of the community for many years during the urgent need and there afterwards.

I'm very excited about what we can do at Harrods Wharf. Although we have great support from the London Borough of Richmond, the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, TfL and potential ferry operators, none of this will happen until we get the planning permission from Richmond. We explain the planning process in full on the harrodswarf.com website. So please sign up for updates at harrodswarf.com so we can send you the application link for the Council's website when it goes live. By the way, you don't have to live in the community to voice your support. The Council wants to hear from you if, for example, you run a business in Barnes that's been impacted by the bridge closure, or you are a student/teacher/administrator of a school or a frequent user of the bridge.

Hammersmith Bridge is such an integral part of our lives, and was essential for everything - hospital visits, getting to and from school, connecting with the Tube, meeting friends and colleagues, and so much more. All of this stopped cold, affecting our whole community, including the businesses and medical facilities that serve us. I'm delighted to have the opportunity to help by putting Harrods Wharf back into operation as an integral part of the solution to the Bridge's closure.

Regards,

Jamie Waller

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