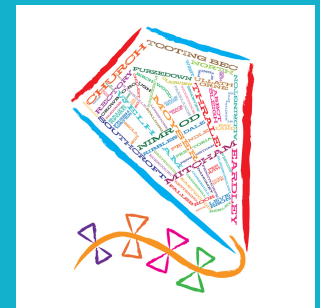


# FURZEDOWN COMMUNITY NETWORK MEMBERS' NEWSLETTER



## WELCOME

Dear FCN Members,

Welcome to our first membership quarterly newsletter, that will keep you informed about what's happening within our community and committee news.

I was privileged to be voted in as Chair of the FCN at our AGM in February. I would like to pay tribute to Dawn Thomas, the previous Chair, whose energy and dynamism was not only behind the amazing Big Day Out events but also took us through the pandemic and kept the organisation going over the last 2 years.

Furzedown ward is expanding; the ward now includes the St Benedict's Estate area, with the border extending to Church Lane. We get more people and two new Churches to join our network. We are aiming to reach out to that area in the next few months.

As well as organising things, we are keen to support local ideas and initiatives across the wide range of people who live in the area. If you have got something you would like us to support or help with, please contact me or any member of the committee. Our details are on the website [www.furzedown.net](http://www.furzedown.net)

I hope you enjoy this first members-only newsletter. It will have regular features, what's on, a 'spotlight on' section, be that on local history and/or local Furzedownians plus the dates of our committee meetings and events. We would love your feedback and if you want to publicise an event you might be holding – please email [info@furzedown.net](mailto:info@furzedown.net).

A list of more local community groups you can become involved with, can be found on our website [www.furzedown.net](http://www.furzedown.net)

We look forward to your thoughts and feedback.

Sarah Forester  
Nimrod Road Resident and FCN Chair

## KEY DATES AND EVENTS

### FCN COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

7.30PM AT  
THE FURZEDOWN PROJECT  
23RD MARCH  
27TH APRIL  
25TH MAY

**FCN RUN, WALK, SCOOT**  
2ND MAY, 10-12

**FCN SPRING QUIZ NIGHT**  
14TH MAY, 7PM

**SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD  
OPEN PUBLIC MEETING**  
17TH MAY, 7PM  
ALL WELCOME

## FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



@furzedowncommunitynetwork



@furzedownnetwork

## Spotlight on... Local celebrity Jonny Wright by Dawn Thomas



Jonny Wright has recently moved to Furzedown with his wife and baby daughter. He is a screenwriter, whose current work “Little Darlings” can be seen on Sky Kids and NOW TV. Little Darlings, a Jacqueline Wilson novel adapted for television, tells the story of a young Black girl who discovers her dad is a famous popstar (<https://www.swlondoner.co.uk/entertainment/11022022-sky-tv-airs-jacqueline-wilsons-little-darlings-book-starring-90s-jamelia-and-lemar/>).

Dawn and Lynn (FCN committee) interviewed Jonny at The Furzedown Pub in February to discover a little more about his life and work.

### Why did you choose to live in Furzedown?

My wife and I were looking for a bigger house; our family was expanding so we needed more space. We liked the vibe of Furzedown; the community feel of Moyser Road with its small independents like Life of Fish appealed to us. Furzedown is quieter, less built up than many surrounding areas and has great access to Tooting Commons. I sort of knew the area having lived in Avoca Road many years ago and rented in Brixton, Dulwich and Streatham. It also has good access to my in-laws who live in Surrey.

### What do you like about living in Furzedown?

Its great community spirit. We have joined our street WhatsApp group where people look out for each other, and we are getting to know our neighbours. I'm a Yorkshireman and it reminds me of home as the people here are friendly. I love the fact that people offer items that might be useful to others, we recently got a rocking horse via our street WhatsApp group, perfect for our daughter.

### How did you get into writing?

After graduating with a History and Politics degree from the University of Liverpool, I came to London to do an Masters in Acting at ArtsEd. Drama School. At the end of my course I performed a series of monologues and out of all the monologues I performed, my drama teacher (Adrian James) loved the one I had written. I had decided to write an original piece as I couldn't find any that were Black and Northern. My original piece really impressed him and he encouraged me to develop it into a full length play. The play was commissioned by the Talawa Theatre Company, which then helped me get involved with Soho Theatre, The Royal Court and RADA doing playwriting groups. The Talawa success also led to me writing a film for Film4 and a sitcom which helped me to gain lots of experience as a screenwriter.

### How did you come to adapt Jacqueline Wilson's bestselling book Little Darlings into a mini-series?

I hadn't really done much writing for kids before, but my new agent Julia Tyrrell suggested doing the JW book. I managed to get down to the last four writers to be considered and then pitched my vision for the show via Zoom but the link went down halfway through the pitch! Despite that it went well, Jacqueline Wilson was then sent a recording of my pitch and together with Sky and the production company (Kindle Entertainment) JW approved me and another writer (Nathan Bryon) to co-write the whole series.

Kindle Entertainment gave us a lot of freedom. Most of the main characters are Black and many of the behind scenes crew were also black. We saw this production as more than just a Diversity and Inclusion tick box exercise, where you might have a few Black characters on screen but no-one behind the scenes. We wanted to ensure there was diversity behind the camera as well as in front of it. I'm pleased Little Darlings achieved this.

### What next?

The film version of Little Darlings will be released in April and I'm hoping there will be a second series of the TV show as well. I'm currently writing an original script, a drama/comedy for Sky, and a film with the BFI (British Film Institute), so lots in the pipeline.



# FURZEDOWN COMMUNITY NETWORK

## What's your favourite coffee shop in Furzedown?

I'm afraid my favourite coffee shop isn't in Furzedown, it's just on the perimeter – MUD, in Tooting. But I really don't have choice as to which one can be my favourite because MUD is owned by my wife and brother-in-law!

## What's your favourite restaurant?

Well, we haven't been out that much since the birth of our baby daughter but were really pleased that a branch of Smoke and Salt has opened in Tooting. We used to go to the one in Brixton, and we do love Balham Social for takeaways.

## What's your favourite pub?

Again, we haven't been to any pubs since we've moved in over 6 months ago, but really like the Furzedown. Someone recommended the Wheatsheaf at Tooting Bec, but we hope The Furzedown will become our go-to.

## If you were Mayor for a day, what would you do?

I would reduce all public transport costs and improve accessibility on the Tubes. I really struggle with a pushchair at some Tube stations. I would increase the number of buses and Tubes to really encourage people to leave their cars behind and use public transport. The empty buildings across London need looking at as well so I'd look at housing too... maybe too much for just one day...

## What's your guilty pleasure?

I absolutely love a romcom, from good ones like When Harry Met Sally to not so good ones like the 2019 US TV series of 4 Weddings and Funeral. I just love love!

Thank you to Jonny for talking to us. We wish him the very best with his upcoming projects. Don't forget that Little Darlings is on Sky 1 now and available on streaming service NOW.

You can follow Jonny on Instagram [@jonny\\_wright\\_wright\\_writer](https://www.instagram.com/jonny_wright_wright_writer)

## COMMITTEE NEWS

At the AGM on 9th February 2022, Dawn (Thomas) stood down as Chair of the FCN though will remain on the committee. Many thanks to Dawn for all her work as Chair over the last four years. Sarah (Forester) has taken on the role of Chair.

David (Andrew), Sue (Clarke) and Tim (Kahn) also stood down. Many thanks to them for all their work on the committee over many years.

### The 2022 FCN committee is:

Officers: Chair – Sarah Forester

Vice Chair – Steffi Backhouse

Treasurer – Hannah Wallden

Secretary – Peter Ramell

Elected Members: Léonie Cooper, Judi Gasser, Anna Godsiff,

Monika Ivanova, Anthony Langan, Phee Mann-Bryans, Annie McCall,

Lynn Selwyn-Reeves, Angie Stephenson (Membership Secretary),

Dawn Thomas and Neha Sekar. Co-opted member - Jo Town.





# FURZEDOWN COMMUNITY NETWORK

## Furzedown Lodge

A brief insight by local historian Helen Long

When I moved to Furzedown, now over 30 years ago, I began to research its history and was amazed when I found out the number of famous and infamous people who had lived here. Unfortunately, only two historic buildings remain. One is Furzedown House with its barrel-vaulted conservatory, which still survives as part of Graveney School today. The other is Furzedown Lodge. This has been mentioned on the chat group lately as it is in dire need of repair. So, I will start with its history.

It was built as the lodge to Furzedown House in 1862 replacing 2 earlier lodges. Furzedown House had been built by Jacob Yallowley, a wealthy city banker in 1794, but by the 1860s it was owned by Philip Flower a very wealthy businessman. He employed one of the fashionable architects of the time, James Knowles Senior to build a barrel-vaulted conservatory on the west of his house and a brand new one-storey lodge. We now know this building as Furzedown Lodge, and this was built at the end of Furzedown Drive.

The lodges housed the estate gardeners. In the 1901 Census the gardener is named as George Hambleton who lived here with his wife, son and widowed daughter. The Seely family, who had bought the estate from Philip Flower, sold it around 1903 and the roads we know today were laid out for housing from 1905 onwards.

Wandsworth Council bought a lot of the land and established a teacher training College at Furzedown House from 1915. However, they kept the lodge and used it to house their own gardeners. In recent times 2 ladies lived there who had been gardeners working for the Council.

The last lady died a couple of years ago and since then the Council seem to have left it uninhabited and neglected. The lodge, though small, is very attractive with a decorated cove and frieze.

We are lucky to have such a lovely building in Furzedown and it must be preserved for future generations.





# FURZEDOWN COMMUNITY NETWORK

## LONG SERVICE AWARDS 2021

We asked for nominations for members of our community who have lived or worked in Furzedown for a number of years and you felt had made a valuable contribution to our Community over those years.

Awards have been made to Adrian Fisher, Audrey Silkin, Beryl Richards, Caroline Holden, Denise Broad, Di Berry, Jacquie Dredge, John Farebrother, Rev Professor June Boyce-Tillman, Linda Lewis, Rev Marc Richeux, Roger Wates, Sarah Armstrong, Sarah Forester, Suzanne Ellis and Vijay Bhuchar.

Many thanks to everyone for their important contribution to the Furzedown community!

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS:

As we enter a new era, with the pandemic (hopefully) mainly over, we are looking to build on existing relationships and projects and to develop our work in new directions.

We are looking to have greater contact with local schools, FYC (Furzedown Youth Centre) and the Furzedown Project. We might look to support the possibility of mini "fun days" in particular parts of Furzedown, look at how we might be able to use the Rec Pavilion; and how we could support individuals and other groups in undertaking projects and putting on events.

## LOCAL ORGANISATIONS WE ARE WORKING WITH:

At the AGM, we enjoyed a number of very interesting short presentations from local organisations we have worked with or supported - the Furzedown Youth Centre; the Garden of Discovery; Gift from Furzedown; Faylands Children Centre; and the Furzedown Project.

Paul Rook (Outreach Youth worker at the FYC) mentioned there being a need for volunteers to chat to students at a weekly coffee morning organised by FYC. Anyone interested in this please contact Peter ([peter.ramell@btinternet.com](mailto:peter.ramell@btinternet.com)) in the first instance.



JUST FOR FUN...

**ANAGRAM**  
(ANSWER ON  
PAGE 7)

SWEET DOCTOR

# FURZEDOWN COMMUNITY NETWORK

## PROJECT IDEAS THE FCN ARE LOOKING TO SUPPORT:

### Extension of the Furzedown Ward boundaries:

At the AGM Léonie Cooper reported that, with changes being made to electoral ward boundaries, Furzedown ward is being extended to include also the area between Rectory Road and Church Lane (previously in Graveney ward). It was agreed that the FCN will reach out to this new area. Among other things we are leafletting addresses in the new area to inform people of FCN and what we do.

### Proposal for World War II War Memorial

Martin (Beaver) presented a proposal to commemorate local people killed in the Second World War, including civilians killed in bombing raids. A small group is being established to take this work forward. If you are interested, please contact Martin on martin.beaver@sky.com

### Proposal for public seating in Furzedown:

Sarah (Forester) and Steffi (Backhouse) presented a number of suggestions for improved public seating in Furzedown, including improved disability access. Email sarah.forester54@hotmail.com if you have comments or would like to be involved in progressing this idea.

### Pavers for the Platinum Jubilee

We are considering installing paver(s) from FCN for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, similar to those commemorating the Diamond Jubilee. We are looking at costs and location options.

We would be glad to hear any comments on the above ideas: and are also looking for more ideas so if you think of something you'd like to share to make Furzedown even more fabulous, email us with the details - info@furzedown.net.

## MEMBERS' OFFER

Games Night at The Furzedown on 30th March 7-10pm, 15% discount on all food and drinks for FCN members.

## PRIZE DRAW

Each quarter, all current members will be entered into a prize draw. Prizes might be 2 tickets for one of our events or a gift donated by one of our great local businesses. This edition's prize is for 2 tickets to the Quiz Night and the winners have been notified.

If you are a local business interested in donating a gift for our prize draw, please email us at info@furzedown.net.





# FURZEDOWN COMMUNITY NETWORK

## FCN EVENTS

### QUIZ NIGHT

Our annual Quiz night returns on 14th May at Seely Hall, Chillerton Road SW17. To book your tickets, email Dawn at [info@furzedown.net](mailto:info@furzedown.net). Maximum table size is 8 and numbers are restricted so you do need to book ahead.

You are welcome to bring your own drinks and snacks.

There will be a bottle raffle.

Tickets are £5 each (£4 for FCN members). All proceeds will go to SLRA (South London Refugee Association).

### RUN, WALK, SCOOT

Our great Run, Walk, Scoot event is back on 2nd May from 10am to midday.

Join us to follow the map around some of the Furzedown streets to complete the 5k route. Get your map stamped at each of the checkpoints to receive a medal at the end. Everyone welcome, come rain or shine!

### SUMMER EVENTS

As well as the Run/Walk/Scoot event and our Quiz Night, we are looking at other events for the summer, possibly linked to the Platinum Jubilee, Jazz on the Lawn and more.

We would love your input into events you'd like to see happen or would like to put on for the community.

### Newsletter Team:

Creator: Dawn Thomas

Designer: Lynn Selwyn-Reeves

Proofreading - Peter Ramell

Distribution - Angie Stephenson & Jo Town



ANAGRAM  
ANSWER

SWEET DOCTOR  
WESTCOTE ROAD



@FURZEDOWNCOMMUNITYNETWORK



@FURZEDOWNNETWORK

PAGE 7