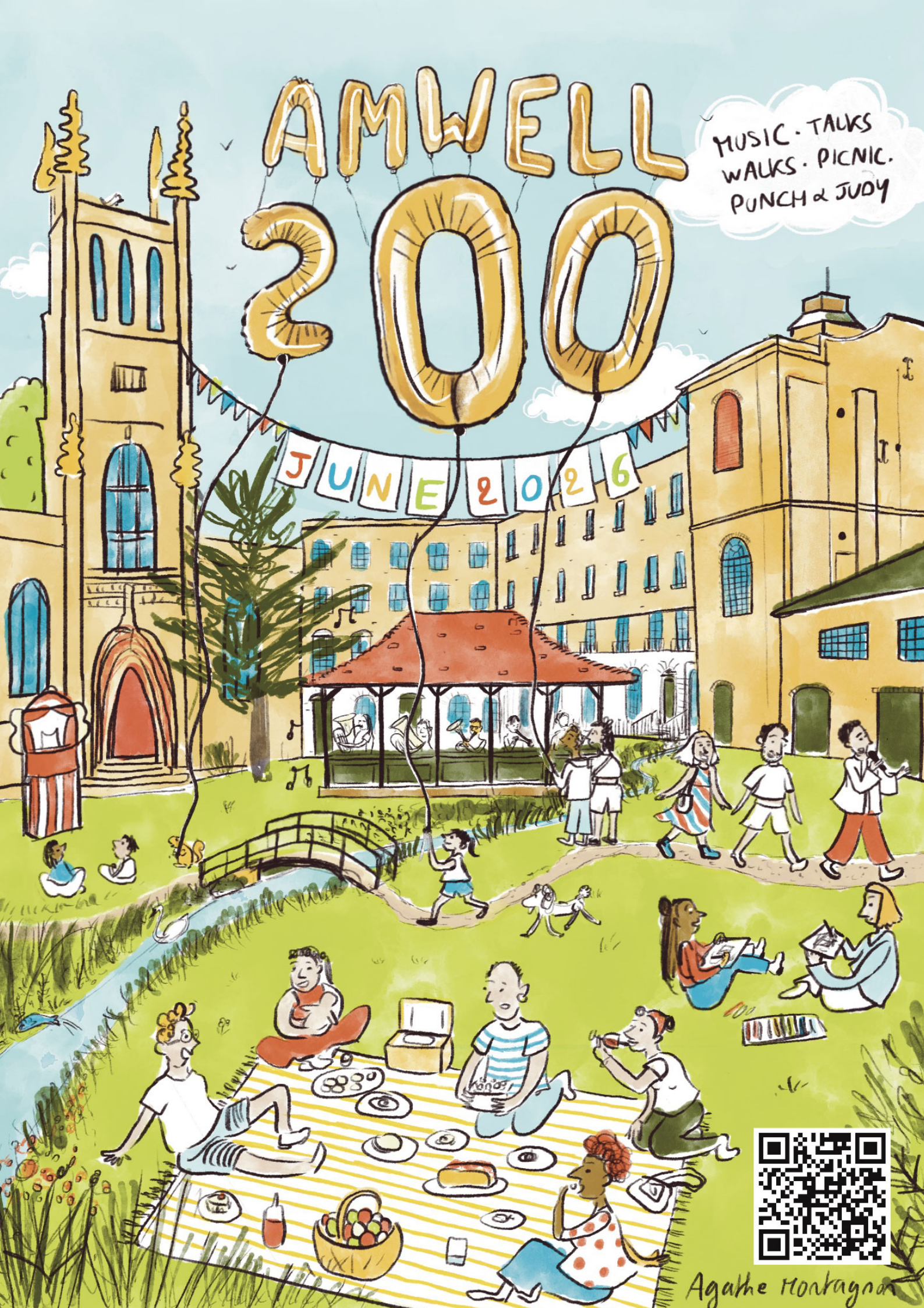


# AMWELL 2026

MUSIC · TALKS  
WALKS · PICNIC  
PUNCH & JUDY



Agathe Montagnon



### Welcome to the first all-colour newsletter ...

### Amwell 200 will be the biggest event organised by the Society in its history. Please be part of it.

It is with very great pleasure that we announce our summer festival - Amwell 200 - jam packed with events and activities for all the family between **Friday 19 and Sunday 28 June 2026**. We'll be announcing the full programme in March, but to give you a taster of the detail, we are working closely with the Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration - at least two events will be closely linked to our valued partner. We are planning a day trip to Great Amwell to visit the source of the New River which pre-dated the Georgian house-building by 300 years. We are delighted that we are planning family picnic to which families, and especially children will, be welcome. The picnic will include music, Judy and Punch [the modern version where Judy fights back] and a story-telling event about the New River. Additionally there will be talks and walks and a local buzz, so please join us and - even more importantly - tell your friends and neighbours. While Amwell 200 is a celebration organised by the Amwell Society, we will welcome visitors from further afield; from Islington and across London. Watch this space.

### Why Amwell 200?

It is roughly 200 years ago that the New River Company and the Lloyd Baker Estate decided to embark on the building of two elegant housing estates ... quite an innovation and a bold enterprise not unlike the building of the Royal Crescent in Bath which was built between 1767 and 1775. While not quite as grand as the Royal Crescent, the Amwell area had a similar level of ambition to Bath. Located just north of the City and in a significantly higher location, the Georgian house-building with its main street of elegant shops provided ambitious clerks, doctors, lawyers, bankers and other, similar professionals to go - quite literally - up in the world and rent a large, fashionable family house in a highly fashionable quarter, already well-known for its green fields, mineral-water springs, and gymnastic enclosures. In the early late 17th and early 18th centuries Sadler's Wells, Bagnigge Wells, New Tunbridge Wells and even St Chad's Wells provided all classes of people the chance to drink healthy chalybeate [iron-rich] water and take advantage of the pleasure gardens that grew up around the springs. So our area had an existing reputation for fresh air and was a safety-valve from the crowded and overpopulated streets of the City.

The Amwell Society campaigns to protect and promote the area and its architectural heritage and to encourage a sense of community. The Society serves Pentonville Road, Penton Rise, King's Cross Road, Farringdon Road, Rosebery Avenue and St. John Street and all the streets within the area. The Society is open to all residents. For information about becoming a member, e-mail [info@amwell.org.uk](mailto:info@amwell.org.uk)  
President, Jane Wainwright. Chairman, Peadar Sionoid. Secretary, Joanna Ward. Treasurer, Keith Baker. Newsletter, David Sulkin.  
The Amwell Society is a constituted group with annual accounts. The Society is a member of the London Forum.

### Clerkenwell Parochial School update

As previously reported, many members are anxious that the former primary school on Amwell Street should have an ongoing commitment to education in some form or another. With numbers of children in London schools decreasing it was regrettable that the former owners, London Diocesan Board for Schools [LDBS] could not offer the St Mary Magdalen Academy in Liverpool Road, N1 a long-term lease to house their 6th Form Campus. The young people were a credit to their school and the Amwell area.

Early in 2025 the school buildings were sold by LDBS to a firm called Tri Capital. Within weeks the buildings were again placed on the market again at a significantly higher asking price.

After the first sale we were in contact with Tri Capital about the very ragged and ineffective pruning of the Listed fig tree in the school garden carried out by LDBS. Tri Capital is planning a proper pruning programme to protect and improve the tree which is loved by many people in our area. Thanks go to them for this.

In the meantime we were contacted by a planning consultancy called ROK Planning canvassing our views about a proposed change of use for the buildings. We were assured by ROK that if change-of-use is achieved, it would give the freeholder the ability to let spaces in the school to creative industries which are now so prevalent in Clerkenwell as a whole.

As a consequence of this proposal we have been in touch with Ruth Hayes, our councillor, and the Director of Planning at LBI, to establish if a change-of-use application has been made. We have been assured that no application has yet been submitted.

Education comes in many forms. The Society is not going to be stick-in-the-mud and inflexible. There is no chance that the buildings would suit a 21st century preparatory school no matter how niche or specialised the school might be. However, there are many training and business organisations that would fit well at CPS. If the buildings are too big for one organisation a consortium of organisations would be ideal. The goal of the Society in relation to CPS is that the buildings should be used for a mixed use with a significant commitment to education and development. We value our cohesive community with its many constituent parts and very much want to work with Tri Capital or any new owners so that the CPS buildings continue to have an educational role in our community and are not committed to exclusive office spaces.

**Members' views about the future of the CPS complex would be very welcome.** When working with LBI councillors and officers it would be helpful if we can back up committee views with those of individual members. So please write to [info@amwell.org.uk](mailto:info@amwell.org.uk) and tell us what you think about the future of the CPS buildings. Before doing so, you might like to read the article on page 3 of the newsletter about the Albion Knitting School.

## Looking after the locality for 52 years

### Message from our Chairman

Welcome to this newsletter - our last of 2025. In preparation for the Amwell 200 festival planned for June 2026, we decided to commission a young illustrator, Agathe Montagnon, to design materials for the festival. The poster on the front of the newsletter is the result of Agathe's splendid work. Well before next summer, the A4 front page of this newsletter will be enlarged to make posters to go all round our area and across Islington. If you have a street window or a shop window we hope you'll promote the festival by displaying a poster. If you are connected to a neighbourhood group, please tell them about Amwell 200 and to join us.

We are delighted that the Quentin Blake Centre of Illustration will open next spring in good time for Amwell 200. Work continues at the New River Head at an intensive pace.

The gargantuan water pipe replacement work carries on in Myddelton Square and Chadwell Street. The total cost of the work will exceed £20m and involves the replacement of 1.9kms of Victorian pipes. Every day there are men in orange suits peering down holes in the road plus the endless shunting bulldozers shovelling earth. When will the work be finished? 2027? When the men in orange are questioned, they say '*Don't ask us, ask the bosses*'. One [unofficially confirmed] problem is that only very inaccurate 19th century location maps exist when it comes to identifying the route and arrangements of the old pipework.

We think that work will begin on the old Children's Society site in Margery Street in 2026. Members will remember that, despite two appeals, permission was granted for a large, completely new building on the site to house both offices and live-work spaces. The Society, along with the Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood Forum, the Margery Street Tenants' and Residents' Association and Wilmington Square residents group appeared at both inquiries and mounted a robust and unified objection. This was based on the scale of the new building and reduction of daylight affecting nearby flats. The decision, in favour of the developer was virtually unchanged from the original plan. Our concerns were ignored. This is why our focus on the future of the CPS buildings is so important.

Also in Margery Street, building work has been started on what was William Martin Court. Puttinu Cares, a Maltese charity, is creating temporary accommodation for Matlese people and their families who are receiving medical treatment in the UK.

We also have timely and interesting new neighbour - the Albion Knitting School - located in Naoroji Street. The AKS shows that education comes in many forms and can significantly add to a community such as ours.

Lastly a big thank you to the Myddelton, Wilmington, Granville and Lloyd Square gardening groups that make such a difference to the whole of the Amwell area.

**As this is our first full-colour Christmas newsletter, here is a vibrant 1920s Christmas illustration. Warm wishes to every member, all tenants, residents and staff of the businesses in the Amwell area.**



### Welcome to new, and returning, members

- Peregrine Beckman & Elizabeth Leicester, Great Percy Street
- Marian Chechiner, Lloyd Square
- Michelle Doughty, Percy Circus
- Polly and Vaughan Grylls, Lloyd Square
- Michael Strauss & Leslie Thompson, Hardwick Mews.
- Ofer Yeger, Lloyd Square.

### Christmas drink. Keep it simple

Sherry has a pretty poor reputation these days, which is a shame. There are many sherries from dry and crisp to naturally sweet which makes it suitable for many occasions and food pairings. Also, and this is very good reason to open a bottle at Christmas into the New Year and beyond, some sherries contain antioxidants and can increase 'good' HDL cholesterol and are also low in calories. Dry sherries are 'fino' and 'manzanilla'. Richer are 'amontillado' and 'oloroso' [good with cheese]. A delicious sweet sherry is 'Pedro Ximénez', exceptionally good with ice cream.

## Looking after the locality for 52 years

### Albion Knitting School: A new chapter in the life of CPS.

*We are delighted to welcome the Albion Knitting School [AKS] to the Amwell community. The School, now fully established in its new studios in Naoroj Street, represents exactly how technological educational practice at a high industrial level can be housed in a redundant primary school. Established in 2014, the Albion Knitting Company is considered the flag-bearer of a renaissance luxury knitwear made in the UK.*

Anson Lau, Knitting School Manager writes ...

Nestled within the heart of the Amwell area, the Albion Knitting School is next to and was formerly part of Clerkenwell Parochial School. The former Knitting school has fitted neatly into the former infant classrooms which have been converted to bring a fresh wave of education, creativity and industry into the neighbourhood. The infant school classrooms were built as part of planning-gain when the old Initial Towel Laundry was demolished in Naoroji Street and the whole block was redeveloped. The Knitting School is beside the CPS's tiny playground; an integral part of the former primary school complex.

The School offers hands-on, industry-driven courses in flat-knitting, computer programming and product development. Accredited by the UK Fashion & Textile Association, its curriculum spans from beginner to advanced levels, helping students develop everything from yarn selection and machine gauges to garment make-up and linking.

What makes the School especially relevant to the Amwell area is its commitment to nurturing local talent and bridging the gap between design education and real-world manufacturing. Look for the Knitting School in Naoroji Street almost next door Amwell Group Doctors' Practice and round the corner from St Helena Garden. It places technical skill-building at the heart of this historic part of London.

Whether you're a designer, aspiring technologist, or simply curious about the modern craft of knitwear, the School's programmes invite you in. Short-course options — evening and part-time — make it accessible to many.

For local tenants and residents, this is more than an educational institution: it's an expression of activity and regeneration in our community. It reminds us that our historic buildings can be lovingly repurposed, sustaining both heritage and future-facing enterprise. We're proud to have such a facility in our immediate neighbourhood



At the knitting computer.

### A reminder to all ...

### Subscription renewal - 1 January 2026

#### Membership and subscriptions

- **Standard membership.** Newsletter delivered by hand. £10.00 pa.
- **Postal membership.** People further afield. £15 pa.
- **Honorary membership.** Those who have served the Society in a special and significant way. Free.

#### Standing orders

Standing orders help us with our administration. So, if you can, please set up a standing order with your bank for £10.00 to be paid every 1st January, then we won't chase you for your subscription. Our bank details are:

**Account: Amwell Society**  
**Account number. 65192526**

**Co-op Bank**  
**Sort code 08-92-99**

If you know your membership number, please quote it when completing the standing order.

The Society depends on your subscription. It is run by a group of committed volunteers and all our activities are aimed at supporting the community.