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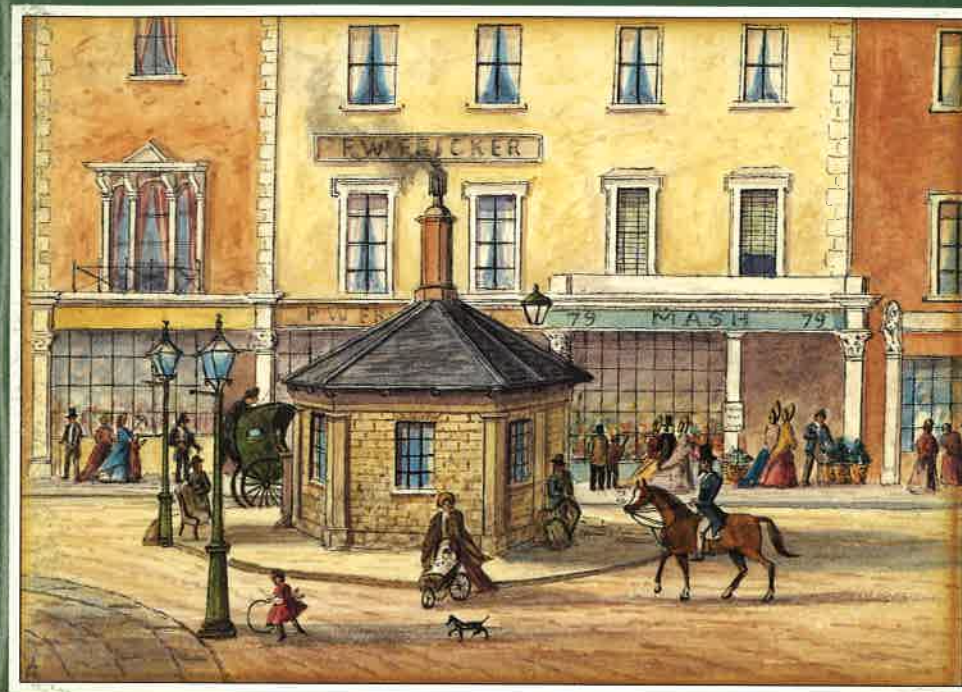
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THE Kensington Society



Annual Report 1990-91

THE

Kensington Society

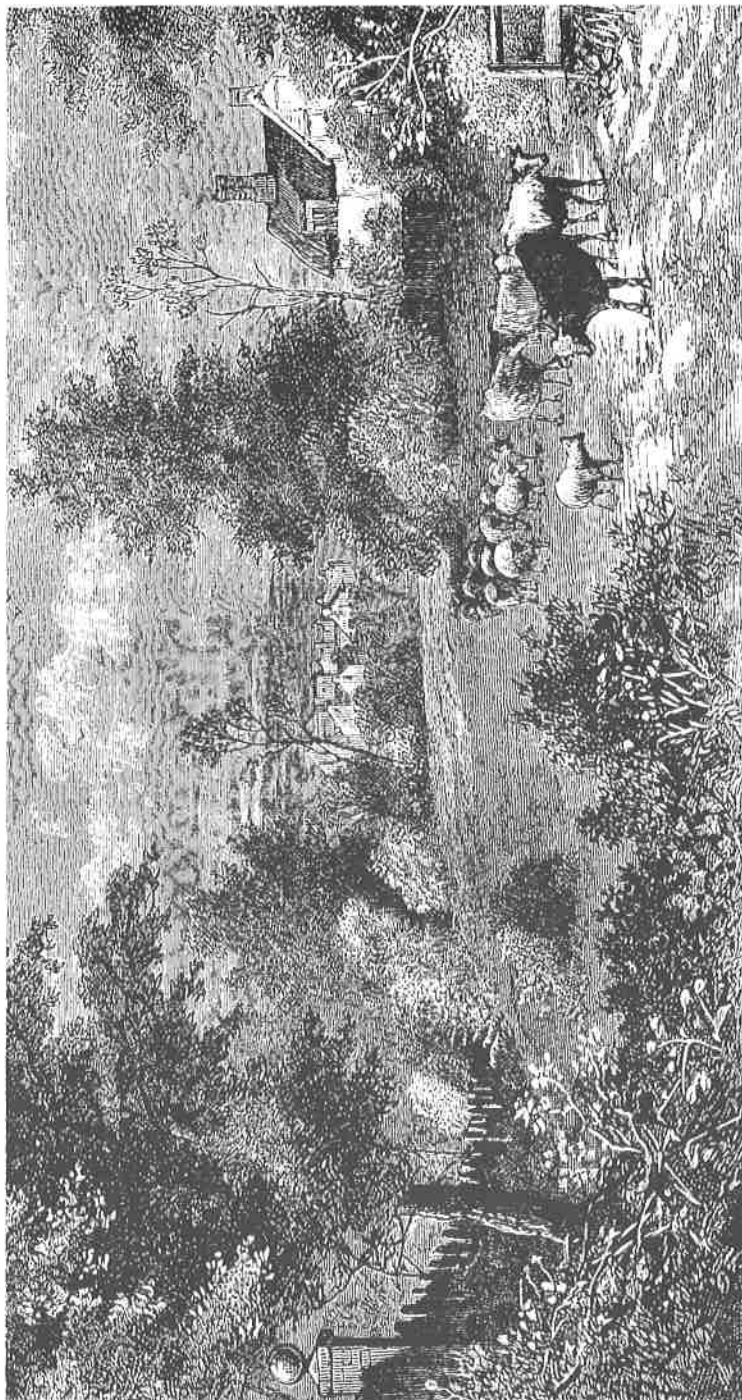
The objects of the Society shall be to preserve and improve the amenities of Kensington for the public benefit by stimulating interest in its history and records, promoting good architecture and planning in its future development and by protecting, preserving and improving its buildings, open spaces and other features of beauty or historic or public interest.

Registered Charity No. 267773

Annual Report 1990-91

FRONT COVER

Notting Hill Gate 1861 at the top of Pembridge Road



Notting Hill in 1750

The Kensington Society

PATRON

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER, G.C.V.O.

PRESIDENT

JOHN DRUMMOND, C.B.E.

VICE-PRESIDENT

THE RT. REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF KENSINGTON

COUNCIL

Sir Ronald Arculus	The Hon. Laura Ponsonby
Ian Grant	Sir John Pope-Hennessy, C.B.E.
Miss Mary Goldie, C.V.O.	Dr. Norman Power
Peter de Vere Hunt	Mrs Irene Scouloudi
Antony Jabez-Smith	J. Single
Dr. Peter Nathan	R. T. Wilmot
Sir Duncan Oppenheim	J. D. Williams
Dr. Stephen Pasmore	Michael Winner

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN: GEORGE POLE

VICE CHAIRMAN: BARNABAS BRUNNER

Barnabas Brunner	Michael Middleton, C.B.E.
Mrs. G. Christiansen	Harry Morgan
Philip English	Richard Newcombe
Robert Martin	George Pole
Robert Meadows	Robert Vigers

HON. SECRETARY AND EDITOR OF REPORT: Mrs. G. Christiansen

HON. AUDITOR: Andrew Snelling, Barclays Bank PLC

Foreword

Looking back over recent years I have the impression that when writing the foreword to the Annual Report, I always take the opportunity to let off steam about some of the problems which preoccupy me, whether it be litter, street furniture, road surfaces or the larger issues of planning and development. I suppose that all of us have a complaining streak—and goodness knows there is often justification for it—but perhaps this year I should try and look at the brighter side of things and at some of the successes and advances which have been made.

Despite the problems of contemporary life, it seems to me that London is still a much more agreeable city to live in than many other capitals. Beyond that, the Royal Borough remains, in the main, one of London's pleasantest areas. Of course there are parts of the Borough that have not had the investment or the attention that would make the whole as attractive as its best parts. But nevertheless, in so many districts one has a feeling of a community that likes living there and has done something to improve the quality of life for its inhabitants.

It is so often in the detail that we fall short and this is why I go on about things like street furniture. But here also there is good news. The Council has appointed a consultant architect to undertake a study on matters like street furniture and pavements to see whether something can't be done about tidying up the mess. Ironically, the Borough seems to be more messy than ever in its realignment of traffic lanes in the High Street and in Notting Hill Gate. I know about the need to reinforce the arches of the Circle line, but I do think that some parts of the schemes make for traffic congestion and even more visual mess. Perhaps we can get a better explanation from the Council of why they think this is the right thing to do.

Many of the improvements that have happened in the Borough over recent years have been due to hard work by members of the Society. I think we should be grateful to all of them for the efforts they have made and at the same time encourage them to make sure that this idea of community and work for it is carried on in a new generation of younger members.

JOHN DRUMMOND.

Annual General Meeting

The 1989-90 Annual General Meeting was held on 3rd May 1990 in the Central Hall of the Convent of the Assumption, 23 Kensington Square.

The Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting, previously approved by the Executive Committee and circulated in the Annual Report, were taken as read and signed by the President as Chairman of the Meeting. There were no matters arising.

Mr. George Pole, Chairman of the Executive Committee, in moving the adoption of the Report said:

'It is evident from the Report that the building boom within the Royal Borough shows no signs of abating and many residents have lived in a dust bowl and suffered noise and nuisance for considerable lengths of time. The increased number of planning applications have placed a severe strain on the resources of both the Council and the Society. The number of Appeals at which the Society has been represented has increased. An encouraging development has been the extent to which residents' associations have been active in their positive opposition to unsuitable property developments in their areas.

'All major planning applications, as well as some unsuitable small ones, have been carefully scrutinised by the Society and relevant representations made to the Council whenever necessary. St. Mary Abbots Hospital site, South Kensington Station, 1-13 Brompton Road, the Odeon Cinema and Brompton Hospital are examples.

The adoption of the Report was moved by Mrs. Spicer and seconded by Mrs. Norman Butler.

In the absence of the Treasurer, Mr. Pole introduced the audited accounts for the year ending December 1989. Mr. Pole drew attention to the rising costs, but said that to some extent these were covered by the revenue from advertising in the Annual Report.

Barclays Bank PLC, Notting Hill Gate, had agreed to act as Hon. Auditor; Mr. Andrew Snelling, Private Banking Manager, had also agreed to deal with Covenants. The Princess Alice Memorial Garden continued to be maintained by Mrs. Christiansen.

The adoption of the audited accounts was moved by Mr. Bickel and seconded by Mrs. Christie.

No nominations for the Executive Committee had been received. Miss Seabrook proposed its re-election en bloc. The proposal was seconded and carried unanimously.

Mr. John Drummond, President of the Society, and the Chairman of the Executive Committee, Mr. George Pole, answered a number of questions from the floor.

At the end of the meeting Mr. Michael Winner gave a delightful talk and showed the television documentary film of Melbury Road area, where he has lived for many years.

Kensington Society News

Membership Subscription

The Annual Subscription was due on 1st January (£10). The work of the Society increases every year, sending out reminders entails extra work and increases our expenditure, so please will you help by being a punctual subscriber?

Donations

We are grateful for the donations which we have received during the year and for the support given by our advertisers, without their help this Report could not have been published.

The Memorial Garden, Town Hall

The Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone Memorial Garden continues to be maintained by the Society. A good many shrubs, particularly by the Pieris have required replanting, a considerable amount of general replanting has been necessary. Donations towards the upkeep of the Garden would be welcome.

Retirement of Mr. Webber, the Town Clerk and Mr. Ashley Stephenson, bailiff of Royal Parks

Mr. Webber and Mr. Stephenson retired in June. The Society arranged a small party at 18 Kensington Square and presented them each with a book in recognition of the help they had given to the Society over many years.

Tree Planting

A mulberry tree was planted in Kensington Square Garden in memory of Mr. John de Vere Hunt, a generous member of the Executive Committee and Council of the Society for many years.

Acknowledgements

Mr. A. R. Jabez-Smith has served the Society very generously, he served as Chairman for three years and another three years as Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee. He retired from the Committee at the 1990 Annual General Meeting and has been elected to serve on the Society's Council.

Our thanks are due to **Mrs. Margaret Hardie** for her tremendous help with typing for the Society.

We also record our appreciation of the friendly help we receive from the Planning information room at the Town Hall, in particular we must mention Miss Lesley Jones and Miss Ruth Goudry.

Mr. Andrew Snelling of Barclays Bank plc. We are grateful to Mr. Snelling for his kindness in accepting the position as the Society's Honorary Auditor.

Obituaries

Sadly we report the death of some long standing members of the Society.

Keon Hughes

A Member since the foundation of the Society in 1953, Treasurer of the Society since 1962, Keon was a very active member of the Society and although during later years he lived at Peasmarch in East Sussex he never missed a Committee Meeting. It was on his way to the Annual General Meeting last May that he died in the train. An appreciation by his friend Oliver Lebus will be found on page 6.

Mrs. Joan de Vere Hunt died in January 1990 a few months after the death of her husband John de Vere Hunt. Joan was a very generous member of the Society, always finding a large number of saleable articles for the sales arranged by the Society. Over many years she supported the Society with letters to the Planning Authority every time Messrs John Barker attempted a further encroachment on Kensington Square.

David Cole A.R.I.B.A. died on 14th June in his 67th year. He joined the Society in 1956 and took a tremendous interest in buildings and planning developments in the Borough and supported the Society on very many occasions.

Lord Ponsonby of Shulbrede attended a meeting in May 1953 at 18 Kensington Square to discuss the formation of a Kensington Society, he joined the Society at the Inaugural Meeting and continued until his death to assist the Society in any way he could. An appreciation by George Pole, Chairman of the Society appears on page 6.

Sir Geoffrey Eley C.B.E. A member of the Society for many years died on 17th May aged 85 years. Sir Geoffrey was a financial journalist in the early part of his career, during the 1950s and 60s he became known as one of Britain's most active industrialists.

Miss E. Norman-Butler died on 11th October, she had been a member of the Society since the foundation, she was sister of Edward Norman-Butler, the Society's first Treasurer.

Miss M. R. N. Harmsworth died on 1st June, she had spent most of her life in Kensington, she was the youngest daughter of Sir Leicester and Lady Harmsworth and a niece of Lord Northcliffe. She joined the Society in 1954 and has always taken an interest in the work of the Society. At the age of 18 she worked voluntarily at the Friends of the Poor in Edbury Street and during the last war she joined the

Fire Services as a driver and later worked at the largest First Aid Post in London. She will be greatly missed.

Keon Eldred Hughes

Little did those of us who attended the Annual General Meeting of the Kensington Society on 3rd May 1990 realise the significance of the empty chair on the platform next to the President and the Chairman of the Executive Committee.

Keon Hughes, our greatly respected and much loved Honorary Treasurer, was on the train from Hastings to come to the meeting when he suffered a serious heart attack and died soon afterwards. He was 84.

Educated at Marlborough and Corpus Christi College Cambridge, Keon joined the family publishing firm of Benn Brothers, founded by his grandfather, where at one time or another he became involved in every aspect of the business. He rose to be deputy chairman. They published a myriad of trade magazines, amongst them the Cabinet Maker, their very first publication, in which he retained a special interest throughout his life. He was keenly involved in furthering our export trade, not least to South America. He was chairman of Ernest Benn, who amongst many titles published the Blue Guides, and his membership of the Commonwealth Press Union gave scope for him to exercise his ambassadorial skills.

Keon's dear wife Patsy is a Bostonian and this logically led to his membership of the Pilgrims. He was an ardent supporter of the special relationship with the United States.

Keon saw war service in the army in the Middle East and returned to live in Kensington Gate where his son and daughter were raised.

When he gave up his executive duties in 1974—continuing as a consultant for a further ten years—Patsy and Keon spent much more time at their lovely home in Kent, Dinglesden House in Peasmarsh (believed to be the Dingley Dell of the Pickwick Papers), where he developed a lovely garden. They kept a flat in Cornwall Gardens and until 1983 a small house in Minorca. He loved hunting and was chairman of the East Sussex and Romney Marsh Hunt.

His close association with the furniture industry was evidenced by his long-time membership of the Executive Committee of the Furnishing Trades Benevolent Association, of which he was President in 1959 and a trustee until his death. He was Master of the Worshipful Company of Furniture Makers in 1963 and a trustee and honorary almoner.

A devoted member of the Kensington Society, Keon served on the Executive Committee for 34 years and was Honorary Treasurer from 1962. Careful, thorough and highly intelligent, and though kindly and gentle he never compromised on what he believed to be right. He will be missed and remembered with great affection.

Oliver Lebus.

P.S. As we go to press we have just heard of the death at the end of 1990 of **Philip Pouncey** a valued member of the Society since 1954. He will be greatly missed.

We have also just heard of the death of **Miss Hilda Roberts** an active member of the Society for over 30 years. She will be greatly missed.

Lord Ponsonby of Shulbrede

The death of Lord Ponsonby, Chief Opposition Whip in the House of Lords and a long-serving member of the Society—latterly as a member of our Council—brought great sadness to his many friends and colleagues.

His association with Kensington was very close; he had been brought up here and lived here for most of his adult life. His knowledge of local affairs and his involvement in them, as well as his deep and genuine concern for the socially disadvantaged, made him a much liked and respected member of the Council of the Royal Borough; he eventually became an alderman and the leader of the Minority Party.

Before being made Chief Opposition Whip in the House of Lords, he had at various times served as Chairman of the Greater London Council, the Greater London Citizen's Advice Bureaux, Age Concern Greater London, and the London Tourist Board. His commitment and strong sense of public service are not surprising in view of his background; his great-grandfather had served as private secretary to Queen Victoria and an uncle had given the same service to King George VI.

With Tom Ponsonby's death the Society and the people of Kensington have lost a strong and much valued friend. To his family we extend our deep sympathy.

G. P.

RECORDS OF KENSINGTON SQUARE

by

ARTHUR PONSONBY
(Lord Ponsonby of Shulbrede)

PRICE £3

Obtainable 18 Kensington Square W8

A selection of cases dealt with

Commercial redevelopment in residential areas continues to be of considerable concern to the Society, in particular applications for planning permission for change of use of hostels to hotels.

Brompton Hospital

As stated in our last Annual Report, the Society asked the Borough Council to consider producing a design brief. We are pleased to report that a brief has been prepared by the Council.

St. Mary Abbots Hospital Site

'The development of this site—some 9.1 acres—will be one of the most important projects in recent years, both in extent and the opportunities it offers for an outstanding residential area.'

These comments appeared in the Society's 1988 Annual Report.

The scheme now provides 248 flats, 50 town houses, underground car parking for 353 cars, with 30 car-parking spaces on the surface.

As the largest development site in Kensington for many years, it started as an exciting concept for a new Kensington Garden Square, surrounded by houses. It has ended as something very different.

Mr. Robert Martin, F.R.I.B.A., the Borough Council's Architect from 1972/80, and a member of the Kensington Society Executive Committee, has given details of the development on page 15.

1-13 Brompton Place

The Kensington Society supported the Borough Council's refusal of planning permission for three different schemes.

- (i) Redevelopment to provide 2,645 sq. metres of office space and 115 parking spaces.
- (ii) Redevelopment to provide 2,325 sq. metres of office space, two flats and 116 parking areas.
- (iii) Redevelopment to provide 2,220 sq. metres of office space, four flats and 115 parking spaces.

Brompton Place, a small and constricted cul-de-sac, was considered by the Society to be unsuitable for a car park and office use, but ideally suited for development solely as a residential area.

The applicants subsequently appealed to the Department of the Environment on the above refusals. A local inquiry was held in September. Mr. Robert Vigars, a member of the Society's Executive Committee, represented the Society at the Inquiry. The Department of the Environment dismissed the appeal relating to Scheme (i) but allowed the appeals on Schemes (ii) and (iii).

The decision to allow the appeals on Schemes (ii) and (iii) is

extremely disappointing. The Inspector gave little weight to the Unitary Development Plan policies, which seek a greater residential content. He considered Brompton Place to be closely linked to the commercial activities in the area and that problems of increased pedestrian and traffic movements were insufficient to amount to significant detriment to residential or conservation amenities in the area.

Strong representations were made by local residents and local Associations, as well as by the Kensington Society.

Unitary Development Plan

As members will have observed from last year's Annual Report, the Royal Borough was instructed by the Department of the Environment in 1989 to commence the preparation for the Unitary Development Plan. This will replace the District Plan and will become the statutory planning document that will guide decisions on planning applications. Three public meetings were arranged to enable residents to become involved in the preparation of the Plan.

Six draft chapters have been prepared by the Council and were submitted for public consultation.

The Borough Council has stated that the comments received from the public and interested organisations had been generally helpful in clarifying and strengthening the text of the draft chapters.

Conservation and Development, Hotels, Offices, Industry, and Transportation have been discussed by the Executive Committee and comments have been sent to the Borough Council.

St. Stephen's Precinct, Southwell Gardens S.W.7

90-112 Cromwell Road, 10-16 Grenville Place, 12-16 Southwell Gardens and 114 Gloucester Road.

Erection of an exhibition hall, leisure centre, swimming pool and gymnasium as an extension to the adjoining hotel was strongly opposed by the Society and local residents. Planning permission was refused. We are still awaiting the result of the Public Inquiry.

5, 16a, 16d, 18b, 19b, 30a, 30b Allen House, Allen Street W.8

Appeal against the refusal by the Borough Council for use of seven flats for short-term letting. The Society supported the Borough Council.

Soane Memorial Trust

Donation given towards the repair of the sarcophagus in St. Mary Abbots churchyard by Sir John Soane.

Extension of the Thurloe Estate Conservation Area, which includes South Kensington Station and properties in Thurloe Street and Pelham Street, was given full support by the Society.

Land bounded by Balby Road, Notting Barn Road and Railway Embankment

Application to develop site to provide business, commercial and residential premises. Considered by the Society to be an over-development.

Holland Park

An application was before the Borough Council for the construction in the woodland of Holland Park of an underground water pump, shaft and ancillary structures, including the erection of a switchgear building to connect with the London Ring Main.

This was strongly opposed by the Kensington Society, by the Friends of Holland Park and by the Borough Council.

Engineers were drafted to find alternative sites and the Thames Water Authority has now opted for the roundabout at the end of Holland Park Avenue.

26-27 Queen's Gate Gardens

The Society supported the Borough Council at the appeal inquiry for a ground floor rear extension on the existing terrace.

61-79 Cromwell Road

Application for conversion and for change of use from residential to office use. Society supported the Borough Council at the appeal against refusal.

51 Hyde Park Gate

The Society opposed the erection of an extension to the 11th floor on to the roof terrace.

Harrods Proposed Hotel

131-suite hotel on site now occupied by warehouse in Trevor Square and the two shops opposite Harrods store. Letters opposing the hotel were sent by the Society to the Kensington Borough Council and the Westminster City Council.

117-122 Queen's Gate, 39-49 Harrington Road, 2 Reece Mews

Application for the demolition of 114-122 Queen's Gate and its rebuilding in replicate of the facade to Queen's Gate, and Harrington Road, together with the addition of a penthouse floor to roof level to provide 35 flats. Erection of a new building for consulate and ancillary office accommodation at the rear.

The plans have been examined by the Executive Committee.

Observatory Gardens and 74-78 Campden Hill Road.

Letters have been sent to the Borough Council throughout the year, drawing their attention to the empty and derelict state of these

buildings. We are glad to know, as we go to press, that an application has been made for the refurbishment of these buildings.

Odeon Cinema Site

Mr. Newcombe, a member of the Executive Committee, gave evidence early last year at the public inquiry, supporting the Borough Council's refusal for demolition and development of the site.

Kensington Square

A Draft Conservation Area Policy Statement was sent to the Society in 1985; in spite of the comments made at that time Kensington Square it appears to be the only Conservation Area without a Conservation Area Policy Statement.

The Society hopes that the closure of Derry Street, by the time this Report has been published, will have been made permanent and landscaped. Carlyle Square in Chelsea, bordering on the busy King's Road, was made a cul-de-sac many years ago. Kensington Square is the oldest square in Kensington and the houses are still well preserved on the north, west and south sides. The Society would like to see Kensington Square turned into a cul-de-sac for local access only, by making the east side of the Square two-way. The traffic coming from Thackeray Street should turn right instead of travelling round the Square for access to Young Street and Kensington High Street. Letters have been sent to the Borough Council.

Kensington Gardens—strategic plan

The Chairman and the Hon. Secretary attended a symposium on the future of the Royal Parks in London. A Report was later received. Comments drawn up by Mr. Robert Vigars, member of the Executive Committee, and agreed by the Committee, included:

1. We are opposed to the formation of a coach park; (i) it would be damaging to the amenity of the area in which it would be located; (ii) it would result in an undesirable increase in 'pressure' on the whole western side of the Gardens.
2. We look forward to the restoration of the Sunken Garden area and recommend that the former arched pathways should be re-introduced.
3. We welcome the re-introduction of the Band Concerts on the traditional pattern, but would oppose any large-scale events.
4. We are opposed to the removal of seats from the Flower Walk; we consider them to be an attractive feature in the landscape; removal would make the Walk rather 'sterile'. They are well used; re-location in bays would not serve the same purpose.
5. We hope that any new signing would be unobtrusive and fairly minimal in extent.

6. We are unsure about the tea house proposal in the area of the playground. We hope that there will be further public consultation before proceeding.
7. We welcome the present use of the Orangery as a catering facility and would support the continuance of this on the present limited scale.

These comments were sent to Mr. Rendell, Department of the Environment.



The Flower Walk, Kensington Gardens

The Alec Clifton-Taylor Garden

This has been a very frustrating year, more letters have been written and telephone calls made about this site than about any other matter during the year. The site is still surrounded by chestnut fencing, such as you would normally find on a farm. Recently, but only recently the rubbish has been cleared from the site. The Society had very much hoped that planting could be started in the Autumn.

The last information received was that planting could not take place until April or May because the Council was hoping to obtain a grant from the Government for the resuscitation of derelict sites. This the Society was told was necessary because the cost of making the garden was ninety thousand pounds. The Society was horrified at the suggested cost and have approached a Landscape Garden firm, recommended to the Society, for an estimate for the Borough Council's proposed

plan. The firm agreed with the Society that May was not the time to plant roses and shrubs. The Society has been trying for the whole of January to have a meeting with the Leader of the Council.

As stated in a previous Annual Report Mr. Philip Burkett approached the Society in 1986 stating he would like to plant a rose garden in Kensington in memory of his friend Alec Clifton-Taylor the late President of the Society. The derelict site in Church Walk seemed to be the answer and Mr. Burkett was put in touch with the Borough Council. Fortunately he is still interested in this site for a garden and has had various meetings with the Society.

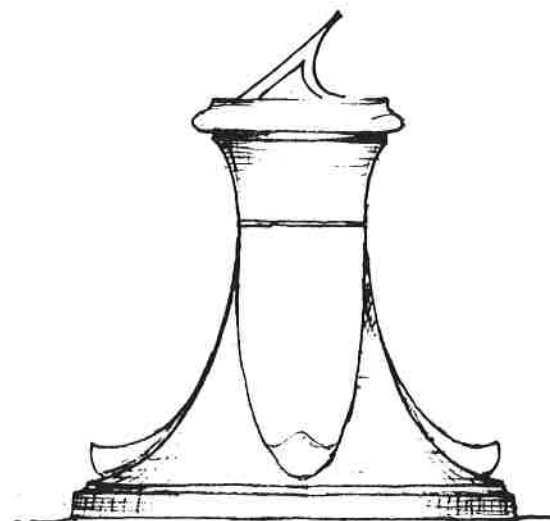
The Society agreed in 1988 to be responsible for a centre sun dial. This is in hand with English Heritage Stone Carvers and is being carved in Clipsham stone.

P.S. As we go to press we have heard from the Leader of the Council, Councillor Mrs Hanham. She has agreed to the firm suggested by the Society, to produce a specification for the same work which has already been specified for the Borough Council.

Other cases dealt with

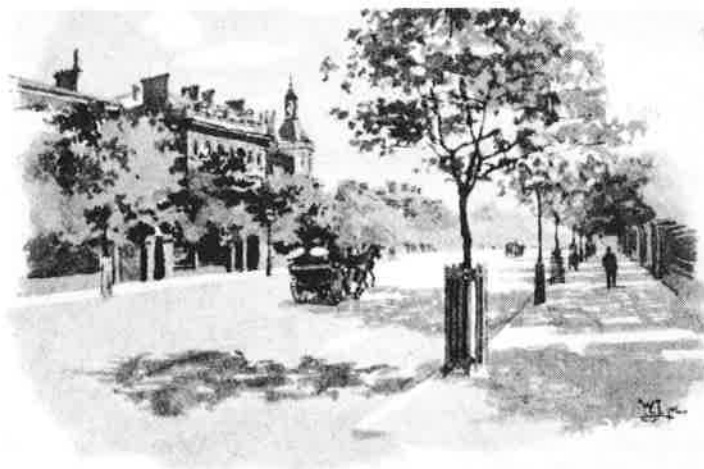
19 Stratford Road, for erection of additional floor at 3rd floor level, supported Borough Council; 8 Kynance Mews, removal of planning permission dated 30.7.63, supported resident applicant; Vicarage Court, supported Borough Council's refusal for erection of mansard roof; 80 Campden Hill Road, supported Borough Council's refusal

Sundial for the Alec Clifton-Taylor Memorial Garden



for erection of extension; 99 Queen's Gate, opposed application for change of use from residential to hotel; 159-161 Old Brompton Road, opposed application for change of use from bed-sitter to hostel; 4 Emperor's Gate, opposed change to use of 3-5 floors to offices; 70 Scarsdale Villas, supported Council at appeal following Council's refusal of 1st and 2nd floor extension; Albert Mews, supported residents in opposing change of use from residential to offices; 164 Gloucester Road, supported Council's refusal at Public Inquiry for change of use from residential; 1 Lansdowne Road, opposed application for 3-storey extension; 40-48 West Cromwell Road, application for extensions to ground, first and second floors for gymnasium and dining room, and for use of No. 42 to hotel opposed by the Society; 9-13 De Vere Gardens, opposed mansard roof extension; 51 Marloes Road, opposed change of use from shop, storage and residential to office use; land rear of 58-60 Notting Hill Gate, opposed construction of four new houses with integral garages as an overdevelopment; 2 Hogarth Place, opposed change of use from residential to office use; 7 Queen's Gate Mews, change from residential to office use opposed; 13 Campden Street, change from residential to office use opposed; 20 Pembridge Villas; 9 Tregunter Road and Cathcart Road; 43 Hornton Street; 60 Scarsdale Villas; 22-23 West Cromwell Road; 40 Victoria Road; 81 Victoria Road; 48 Kensington Court; 156 Cromwell Road; 5 Clareville Grove; 51 Kelso Place and 30 South End Row; 7 Roland Way; 6 Queen's Gate Terrace; 1-3 Trebovir Road; Hotel George, Templeton Place.

The Society has also opposed a number of proposed illuminated advertising boards.



Kensington Palace Gardens

Kensington Green, formerly St. Mary Abbots Hospital

The decision of the Regional Health Authority to develop St. Stephen's Hospital with funds from the sale of the site of St. Mary Abbots has presented a great opportunity in Town Planning but will the full potential be realised?

A Development Brief was produced by the Council and Taylor Woodrow, having made the successful financial bid, proclaimed their intention to create a new Garden Square—a prospect keenly anticipated by the Society.

From the outset the proposed high density to maximise the land value for the Health Authority has caused concern and the Society has made representations to have this reduced, with some success. At the time of going to press the second phase has been refused planning consent on the grounds of too high density. Car parking provision is also considered inadequate for this type of luxury development.

Another disappointment has been the failure of a garden square in the accepted sense to appear in the layout plan. The traditional garden squares of Kensington are either a formal landscape area surrounded by roads and the continuous facades of substantial houses, as in Kensington Square or Edwardes Square, or a somewhat less formal garden entered directly on one or two sides from private gardens as in Ladbrooke Square or Elgin Crescent. In both cases the large green space makes a wider impact by being open to public view adding scale by its dimensions, grandeur by its trees and performing the function of a visible green lung in the centre of the urban built-up area.

At 'Kensington Green' the garden square is merely the space between buildings of widely varying form and heights and makes no contribution to the townscape of green spaces which are the pride of Kensington. Apart from a tunnel-like entrance from Marloes Road which may even be gated and locked, there will be no general appreciation of the landscaping within the development.

The Society also regrets the creation of a large guarded private enclave in the centre of the borough as an expensive ghetto. Security should be designed into the architecture by avoidance of hidden corners and providing carefully controlled overlooking and overseeing of access roads and areas with any further security devices required being incorporated into each block or residence as appropriate.

The Council's Planning Brief suggested footpath links into Kelso Place and Cornwall Gardens Walk, a proposal opposed by residents in these areas. The Society supports their concern and considers that all access should come from Marloes Road.

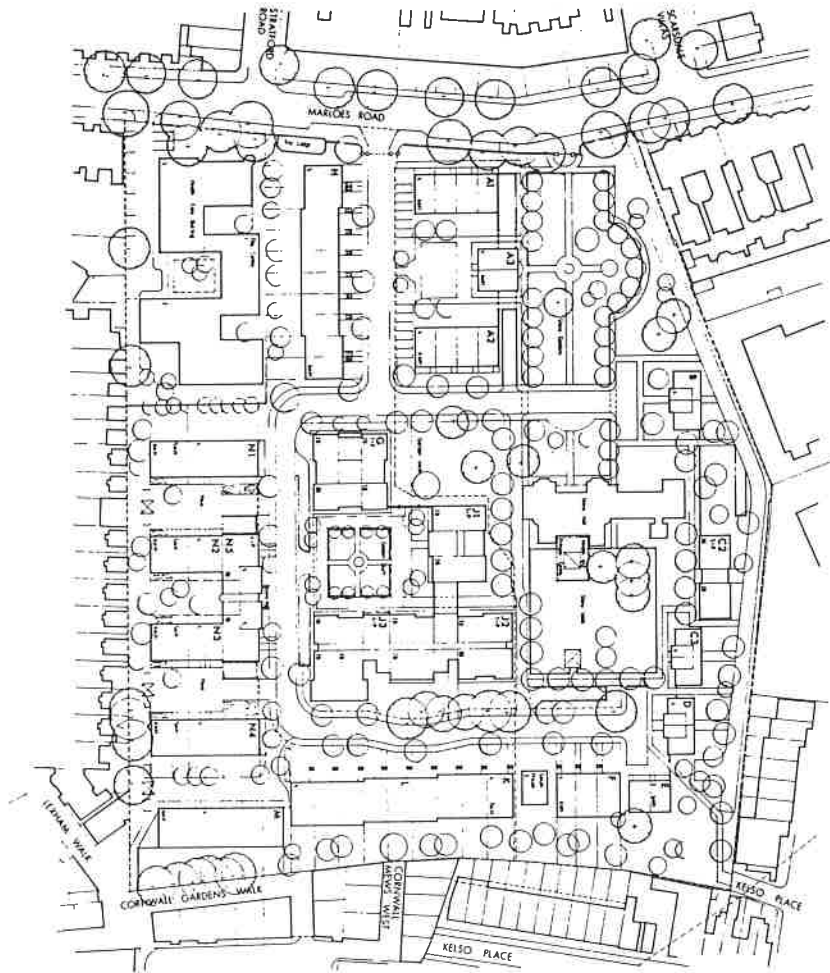
On a more positive note, the architectural design of the houses and flats by Norman and Dawbarn will be in harmony with the surrounding

buildings and the retention of the Stone Hall and enhancement of its setting at the instigation of English Heritage are welcomed.

The scheme may be a success in itself, but will be a failure in that it will do nothing to enhance the inherent qualities of Kensington.

R.R.M.

ST. MARY ABBOTS APPROVED SITE PLAN



Other Activities and Future Arrangements

Visits were made during the year to Royal Botanic Gardens Kew; Royal Society of Arts; Canal Cruise from Jason's Moorings at Little Venice; Chenies Manor House, Buckinghamshire; Ham House, Richmond; Royal Hospital, Chelsea.

Future Arrangements

6th February, 3.00 p.m.

Blue Cross Animals Hospital, Hugh Street, S.W.1

A visit has been arranged for members to see the dedicated work done by the staff for their small patients and the equipment which is now in use. The Hospital was opened in 1906, the first of its kind in the U.K. Tickets required.

12th March, 11 a.m.

44 Berkeley Square

An outstanding 18th-century house by William Kent. Magnificent staircase and saloon with painted ceilings. Tickets required.

17th April

Savill Gardens, Windsor Great Park

Mainly woodland and garden of 35 acres, formal areas of roses and herbaceous plants and many camelias. Coach and entrance fee £12. Coach leaves Kensington Square at 1.30 p.m.

14th May, 6.30 p.m.

The Annual General Meeting will be held at 23 Kensington Square, W.8., in the large hall, Chairman, Mr. John Drummond, CBE. The Meeting will be followed by the Keon Hughes Lecture entitled 'Quality in the Kensington Street Scene' by Mr. Colin Davis, recently appointed by the Borough Council to advise on the Kensington and Chelsea Street Scene, and Mr. Michael Middleton, CBE, late Director of the Civic Trust and a member of the Society's Executive Committee.

3rd June

Shulbrede Priory, Lynchmere, Sussex, by kind invitation of the Hon. Laura Ponsonby

This is a private house dating back to the 12th century, with wall paintings, vaulted undercroft. Musical memorabilia of Hubert Parry. Coach fee, entrance and tea £14. Coach leaves Kensington Square at 1.00 p.m.

17th July

Stonor Park, Henley on Thames

Home of Lord and Lady Camoys and the Stonor family for over eight-hundred years. House of considerable architectural interest built over many centuries from c. 1190. Teas available. Coach fee and entrance £12. Coach leaves Kensington Square at 1.00 p.m.

Sunday 1st September, 10.00 a.m. £4.50 payable at the door

Spencer House, 27 St. James' Place, S.W.1

Lord Rothschild and his company have taken five years and £18 million to restore this 18th-century Stately Home in the centre of London. Tickets required.

16th October, 2.30 p.m.

Linley Sambourne House

Home of Linley Sambourne 1844-1910, Chief Political Cartoonist at Punch. A unique survival of a late Victorian Town House. Entrance fee payable at the door.

PLEASE NOTE: An extra charge of £1 is made for all non-coach visits, to cover expenses incurred in arranging visits. If having taken a ticket the member is unable to join the visit, please notify the Society—there is practically always a waiting list.



The 'White Hart', Knightsbridge, 1820

Details in the Street Scene

By Colin J. Davis
Architect and Town Planner

Mr. Davis has been appointed by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea to review the council's policies for street furniture and pavements.

The Setting for Historic Buildings

'In London these days, it seems to me that the emphasis in conservation has shifted away from the individual buildings and more towards their setting.' This was said by Lord Montagu, Chairman of English Heritage, at the Annual General Meeting of the Society in 1989. Shortly afterwards John Drummond wrote in last year's Report of his concern about the visual jumble of the main streets of Kensington. Both statements acknowledge that there have been considerable achievements in preserving our historic buildings. But our appreciation of those buildings is often marred by the clutter which surrounds them.

Need for Enhancement

Much of Kensington was laid out in a series of carefully designed crescents, squares and gardens. Elgin Crescent, Kensington Square and Onslow Gardens are examples. They were built in the golden age of estate development. Now with others they are included in conservation areas. Conservation areas are, in the words of the Planning Act, 'areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Visitors from abroad are fascinated to discover that so many of the buildings which form the squares, crescents and gardens of Kensington are so well maintained and appear almost as they did when newly built. The buildings themselves need little enhancement. They have been carefully modified to accommodate modern heating and plumbing. Yet they still retain their original architectural quality. Enhancement where it is desirable relates not to the individual buildings but to their setting.

In residential streets the setting for the buildings is almost entirely made up of boundary walls and railings, pavements and street furniture. Until a few decades ago the quality of the materials and unity of design created an almost perfect setting. The original boundary walls and railings were still to be seen. Pavements were laid in large slabs of York stone. Street lamps were made of cast iron and lit by gas. The occasional red pillar box would act as an interesting and useful incident in the scene. The setting complemented the architectural characteristics of the buildings. The buildings themselves were visually as well as functionally more important.

Now the scene has changed. During the last few decades our streets

have had to be adapted to accommodate modern requirements. The present mode and concentrations of vehicular traffic, intensity of street lighting, methods of telecommunication and amounts of discarded waste material were unimaginable at the time that the streets were designed. In some places the gradual accumulation of these practical adaptations has reduced the quality of the setting of the historic buildings. Often the setting seems to be dominated by huge traffic signs and other structures to assist traffic, and a profusion of anonymous cabinets and boxes. Enhancement is certainly desirable.

A Review of Policy

For some years the council has been removing old unsightly concrete lamp posts. The replacements are a more suitable traditional iron design, painted black to match nearby iron work. Now the process of enhancement is being taken a stage further. As part of a conservation policy, the Royal Borough is reviewing all its policies for street furniture and pavement materials. At the beginning of the review Mr. John Davis the council's Director of Highways and Traffic asked me to consult the Society. Mrs. Christiansen very kindly at short notice arranged a special meeting chaired by Mr. Robert Martin and attended by Mrs. Christiansen, Mr. Middleton and Mr. Newcombe.

It was not difficult to agree on the conservation objectives. There should be consistency and simplicity in the choice and maintenance of street furniture and paving materials. They should complement the architectural characteristics of Kensington.

The Pavements of Kensington

The review deals with all those issues. The visual quality of our pavements is an example. In theory we should give as much attention to the detailed design of our pavements as was originally given to the detail of our buildings. Traditionally the pavements of Kensington were made from large slabs of York stone. Sometimes they were six feet square, but usually two feet by three. York stone is a natural material. When they are wet after a shower of rain, the slabs darken and appear to have a greater variety of colour. Thus they were hard wearing, easy to keep clean and provided added interest in wet weather. But above all the large light coloured slabs were a visual complement to the more ornate and decorated architecture of the houses. They also provided a consistency which seemed to unify the different streets, squares and crescents of Kensington.

But a material which had been perfectly suitable for pavements for one hundred and fifty years, became impractical in the latter half of the twentieth century. The large slabs could not withstand the weight of heavy vehicles. If a lorry drove over the pavement, they tended to crack, became dangerous and were expensive to replace. In time concrete slabs were used, or if they in turn were broken, black mastic, solid concrete or small brick sized concrete blocks.

The review concluded that where ever possible the pavements should

be laid in large concrete slabs. Slabs most closely resemble the original York stone, although they do not have the same variety of colour when wet. At street corners the pavements are often lowered to allow prams and wheel-chairs to cross more easily. This is usually the place where vehicles are likely to cut across the pavement and break the slabs. Some other material has to be used. Black mastic would be practical, as would solid concrete, but neither of them is a traditional pavement material in Kensington.

A practical solution which would not appear out of place is the use of small brick sized concrete blocks. They can be laid easily, and then relaid after a service trench has been dug. They have an appearance which is reminiscent of traditional granite setts. Consideration also has to be given to the pattern in which the blocks should be laid. It was noted that throughout the Borough, blocks had been laid in a variety of patterns. This resulted in some quite excellent work at some places, but less visual co-ordination at others. My conclusion was that the best practices were of a very high standard. But from a conservation point of view, they should be adopted more consistently. Paving materials should be used and laid in accordance with specific guidelines.

Use of Guidelines

At the corner of Elgin Crescent and Kensington Park Road, the pavement has been relaid in accordance with the new guidelines. Great attention has been paid to the detailed layout of the blocks. They are laid in a herringbone pattern to provide maximum strength and withstand heavy vehicles. The herringbone pattern runs across the corner, rather than into the corner. Two courses of blocks laid in a stretcher bond pattern form the circumference inside the granite kerb. The kerb is lowered at the corner. The edge of the block work is finished off neatly with one course of blocks in stretcher bond against the adjoining large concrete paving slabs.

The council does not intend to replace existing sound paving. The guidelines will be used in the course of normal maintenance work. They will ensure that the completed work is carried out consistently and that it visually complements the architectural characteristics of Kensington. It will be a long term process. Gradually, as more work is undertaken the consistency will become more apparent.

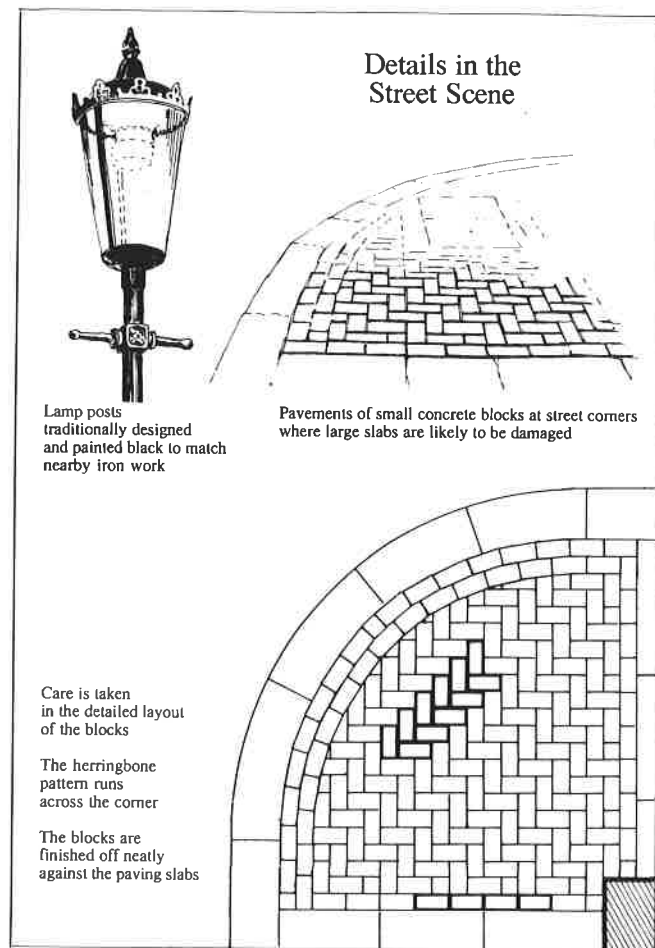
Members of the Society may wish to co-operate

There is a strong desire to reduce the clutter of street signs and especially their supporting posts and brackets as much as possible. Where practical parking signs for instance may be fixed neatly to adjacent walls rather than be placed on individual posts. This will require the co-operation and permission of individual property owners who may be members of the Society. The result will be a significant reduction in clutter and thereby an improvement in the setting of the buildings.

Other support individual members of the Society may wish to give

to the enhancement of Kensington is to consider very carefully the repair and maintenance of walls, railings and gates that abut the pavement. It is difficult to generalise but they were usually originally designed in a similar style to the houses they protect. Where the houses were designed uniformly as part of a terrace, their boundary walls were often also uniform or had a common theme. Such architectural themes may have been lost during more recent maintenance work. Future repairs ideally should replace decorative features and restore the original unity.

The review is an excellent example of the council working closely with the Society. It would not have been possible without the encouragement and enthusiastic support of councillors, council staff; engineers, managers and planners, and members of the Society. By enhancing the setting of the historic buildings we hope to assist in the conservation of the character and appearance of Kensington.



Kensington High Street: Clearing the Clutter

In December 1987 the Kensington Society proposed a list of improvements to repair pavements and remove surplus clutter from the High Street. Although most of this was done by April 1988, there was still plenty left to do. It was hoped that most would be cleared away with the implementation of a total design for the High Street. Now nearly two years after the first list, and with no proposals for design for the High Street in prospect, the Kensington Society wish to suggest a list of things to be done before next April as stage 2 of clearing the clutter.

The main items that need doing are:

- (i) removal of surplus posts, signs and advertisements;
- (ii) repositioning bus shelters, telephone kiosks, and signs;
- (iii) removal of lampposts and attaching lights to buildings;
- (iv) paving across junctions with side roads in the High Street; and
- (v) replacing mastic asphalt paving.

(i) Removal of Surplus Posts, Signs and Advertisements

Surplus posts be removed from outside the following addresses:

- South side:** 55—a stump;
Barkers (Young Street);
Jigsaw
Derry Street—west side
Nickelbys
149—move post 2m west
223—move to lamppost
- North side:** 90—fix sign to lamppost, if retained.
204

Remove surplus signs at junction of Church Street (eg, No Entry sign to slip road.

Remove advert box (formerly map) outside Barkers.

(ii) Repositioning of Bus Shelters, Telephone Kiosks and Signs:

Move bus shelter out to kerb outside Marks and Spencer.

Remove/resite telephone kiosk outside 143

Reposition Turn Left sign at Adam and Eve Mews 1 m north

Move bus lane sign to lamppost outside 204

(iii) Removal of Lampposts and attaching Lighting to Buildings:

The following list excludes those which would involve attaching lighting to housing/blocks of flats.

- South Side:** 3, 13, 31, 55, Barkers (2), BHS, M&S, 123b, 123d, 201, 207, 239
Move lampposts outwards: 131 and 139 (attach bus stop)
- North Side:** Royal Garden Hotel (2), 32, 42, 66, 80, 88-90, 94, 112
Remove surplus lamppost outside Bank Melli

(iv) **Paving across Junctions with Side Roads in High Street:**

Paving across junctions of: Adam and Eve Mews

Our Lady of Victories pavement
crossover

Derry Street

(v) **Replacing Mastic Asphalt Paving:**

Prepare a repaving proposal for Kensington High Street from Kensington Court Passage to Young Street and in front of Barkers.

(The Society welcomes the positive steps taken by the Council in appointing Mr. Colin Davis to advise the Council on the Street Scheme.)

M. Bach



The one remaining wrought iron gate to 55 Melbury Road with the 'temporary' number which has been there for some three years.

Death by a Thousand Blemishes

by Michael Winner

The clouds that threatened the abandoned Victorian mansions of 7 to 13 Melbury Road have not only lifted, there is a burst of sunshine. Last year's Kensington Society Report showed an acceptable modification to three of the four houses to turn them into flats. The fourth was to be restored as a private dwelling. Since then two of them are to be a single private residence (they are joined together anyway) and the third, number 13, is also to be a single family home. Thus restoring some of the grandeur that originally attached to the building of Melbury Road.

To balance this improvement there has been much chipping away



The blocked in gateway of number 55/7 Melbury Road which used to show a view to the fountain, balustrade and garden.

at the beauty of existing listed buildings. This can be seen all over the borough. Owners make 'improvements' in small but significant way to important facades, then later further changes are made, all of them small enough not to attract protest. Collectively over the years these seriously damage the beauty of the area.

The only way to stop this is to object to each such change before it becomes permanent.

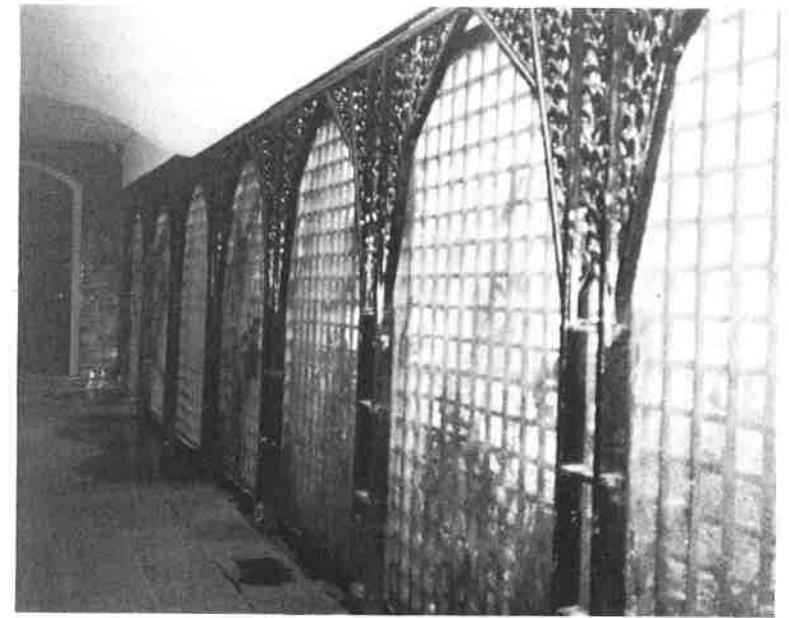
A dreadful example is at the famous Halsey Ricardo house, number 55/57 Melbury Road. This house was sympathetically converted into flats three years ago. The facade remained unchanged except for unsightly wiring which developers have a habit of plonking on the surface rather than setting, at greater expense, into the brickwork.

Having spent vast sums of money on the building the facade was then unbeautified by two grotesque modern video bell switches, both crooked, on two of the arches facing Melbury Road and further left with two ghastly hand painted wooden signs which changed the numbers from those on the wrought iron gates to the new numbers.

Matters worsened last year when the tenant of the front ground and semi-basement flat filled in two of the three wrought iron gates by placing a slab of black painted metal behind them. The symmetrical beauty of the front of the house was destroyed. Where in the past there were three equidistant arches with see-through Victorian wrought iron gates the two righthand arches are now an ugly black slab. The third arch, on the left of the building, still looks into a covered walkway to the entrance door, but the righthand side of the walkway, which



The Halsey Ricardo house at number 55/57 Melbury Road (right) showing the two blocked in doors on the centre and right.



The archway leading to the door of number 55/7 Melbury Road with the Victorian arches covered by trellis and green mesh.

consists of seven beautiful Victorian iron arches with a view to the garden, has been covered by bright green, suburban plastic webbing and a cheap trellis. The front of the building is now a strange sight with one clear arch backed by bright green and two solidified as black blobs.

Previously you had the original architect's intended view of two arched walkways to the front doors with the centre archway revealing the front door, a decorative balustrade and a fountain on which was engraved the name of the architect. All this is now obscured from view. The freeholders, the Ilchester Estate, under the sympathetic management of Mr. Graham Dobson have written a number of times objecting but to no avail. I have written to the Council to the lady supposedly in charge of heritage who does not even bother to answer!

If every important listed building was to have the addition of tenants' whims no architectural heritage would remain other than in a bastardised form. I am sure in your area you can see a number of such examples of deterioration.

With the Halsey Ricardo house the tenant has also replaced a large number of windows on the ground and lower floor level with similar windows but of narrower woodwork. Thus the symmetry of a building, with each window being the same, has been destroyed. This was also done without permission of the freeholders or any of the other bodies who should have been consulted.

At number 8 Melbury Road, a splendid Norman Shaw built studio

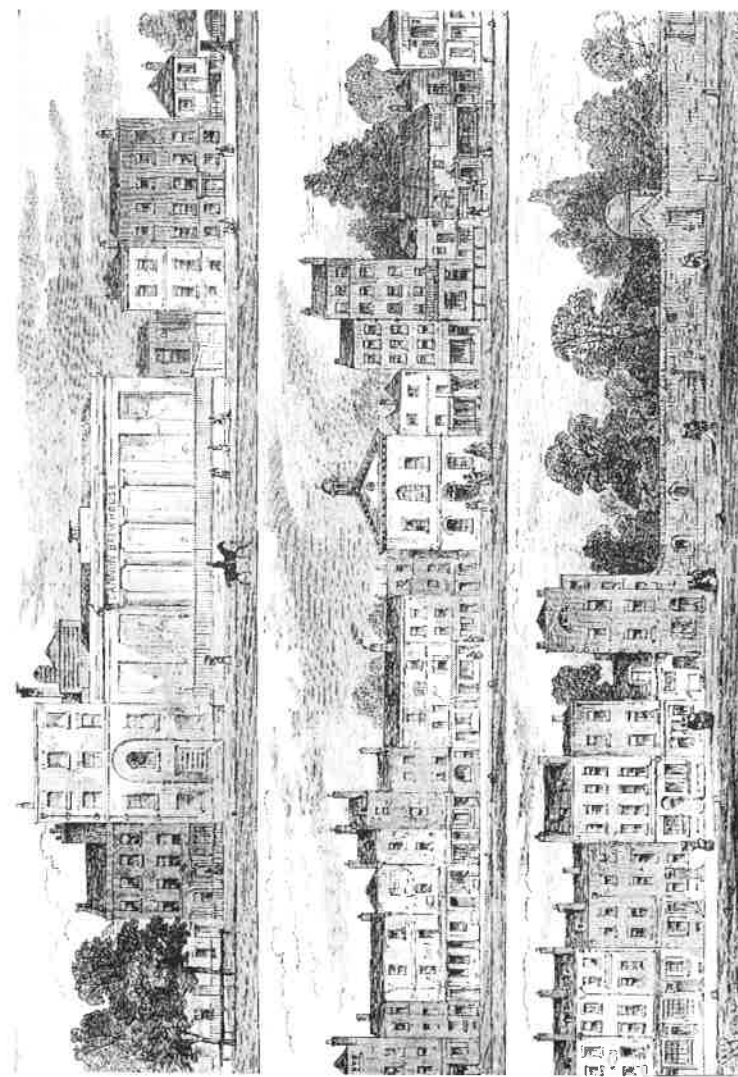
long since converted into flats, but with no change to the frontage, a dreadful brown wood slatted fence has long replaced the original railings. This cuts off, with an ugly slab, the bottom part of the building. In many areas of London temporary wartime measures following the removal of railings have long been made good. But at number 8 this revolting, 'temporary' structure, which looks like it should be round a building site, has remained. This is always a problem where a grand house is divided and flat-owners don't want to pay to improve the general appearance of the building.

I can at least say, smugly, that I have led by example and put railings, an entrance gate, a folly balcony, and many other items back on to my house in Melbury Road all exactly copied from the original plans.

The great artists' mansions of Melbury Road now sit side by side with some of the ugliest blocks of flats in London. The demolition of these important buildings in the fifties was tragic enough, without the higgledy-piggledy desecration of the few that remain intact.



The Tower House (centre) and the house Norman Shaw built for Sir Luke Fildes in which I now live (right) and one of the old Victorian houses opposite, now replaced by flats, in Melbury Road circa 1900.



*The north side of Knightsbridge in 1820, from the Cannon Brewery to Hyde Park Corner
(From a Drawing in the Grace Collection)*

St. John the Baptist Church Holland Road

St. John the Baptist Church in Holland Road is about to undergo its first major refurbishment since the War, and members of the Kensington Society may be interested to know something of its history and its future plans.

Its history begins in 1868, when plans were laid to erect a new church in the north-west corner of St. Barnabas' Parish, to serve an area which was rapidly being built up. At that date, Holland Road was still an ill-paved track, with a few houses here and there. Upper Addison Gardens was only partially built, and was known locally as 'The Slough of Despond', whilst on the opposite side of Holland Road were fruit gardens extending to Addison Road station. Beyond these was a waterlogged area known as 'Scott's Ocean', which stretched over to Brook Green and connected with Holland Road by an unused cartway closed by a gate at the Sinclair Road bridge. An iron church was put up on the present site in 1869, and this served until the erection of the present church in the late 1880s and early 1890s.

St. John's is perhaps the most opulent of all the James Brooks' churches in London. Brooks was often constrained to build in brick—as at St. Chad's Haggerston; or to build in stone, as at All Hallows' Gospel Oak, but leaving the vaulting unfinished. At St. John's Holland Road the second Vicar, Fr. Spencer, presented the parish with a cheque for £5,000 on his induction, and this covered half of the cost of the finished church. Brooks was, in effect, given *carte blanche* to create his masterpiece.

St. John's is the last stone-vaulted building to have been put up in London, and in the massive beauty of its interior, one is transported into the fin-de-siècle world of Compton Mackenzie's 'Sinister Street'. Brooks had planned a massive west tower; when the site proved too soft for the structure, the money set aside for the tower was diverted into a riot of stone embellishment for the interior. Every niche in the stone screens which enclose the choir has its carved statue; the altar reredos is of painted and gilded stone and marble. The church's collection of Edwardian embroidered and jewelled silk vestments, banners and frontals is second to none. The four-manual Willis organ includes pipework by Gern, the master-builder of the great Cavallè-Coll workshops in France, and is one of London's great nineteenth-century romantic organs. No expense has been spared in this last flourish of the wealth of Kensington at the turn of the century.

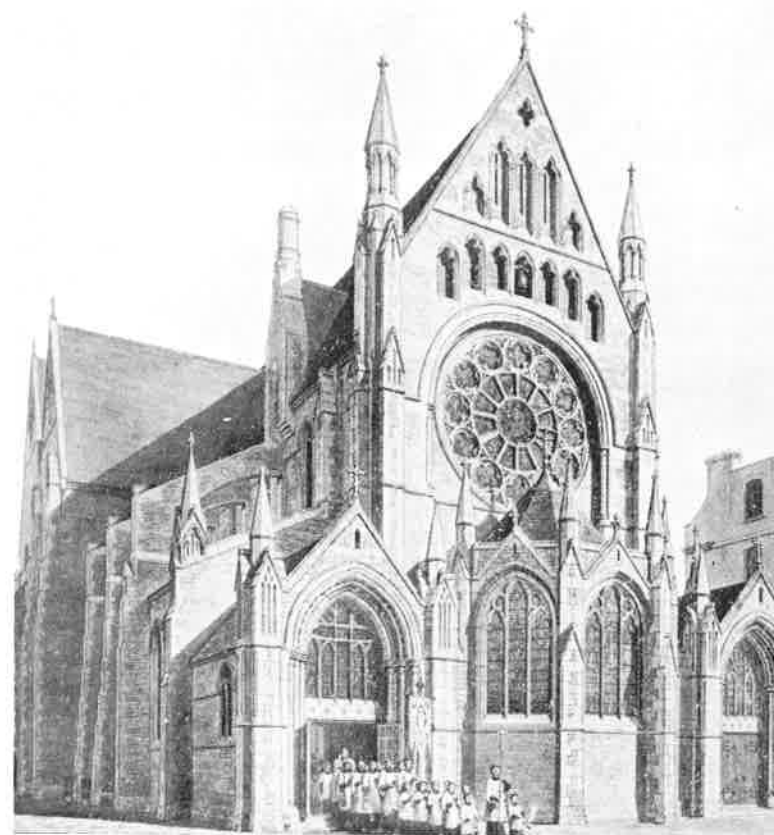
This magnificence also enshrined a faith—the perception that the Church of England could claim to be part of the Catholic church, looking to Rome for its ultimate authority, and looking forward to a recovery of lost unity. In the inter-war years, St. John's drew an enormous congregation from the whole of London, representing an uncompromising statement of this Catholic position within the Church

of England. Inevitably, this won few friends in the Anglican hierarchy, and from the mid-1970s until 1989, the church was without any paid clergy, and on the list for possible redundancy. A small nucleus of parishioners, led by a retired and unpaid priest, fought off closure, and with the appointment of a priest-in-charge in 1989, the Diocese of London has committed itself to maintain the parish and its magnificent church.

Generous grant aid from English Heritage, and a legacy from two parishioners has made possible a badly-needed programme of repairs. Work has now begun to eradicate dry rot; repair the roof; renew guttering and rain-water pipes and to clean the west elevation on to Holland Road. Some £200,000 will be needed in all for interior and exterior works.

Sadly, the church cannot be left open and unattended; but is open every Monday, Wednesday and Friday evening from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. and Sunday mornings and evenings.

The Revd. G. F. Bright.



Church of St. John the Baptist reproduced from Architectural Review, 1908

Memories of the Blitz in Kensington

Dr. Stephen Pasmore

When future historians record that St. Mary Abbots Church was badly damaged by fire in an air raid on the 14th March 1944, it will be difficult for the reader to picture what happened unless he can also read a first-hand account of the disaster. I happened to be there and this is what I wrote the following day in my house in Edwardes Square, W.8.

'My wife and I were feeling very tired and intended to go to bed early. We were listening to some excerpts from *La Traviata* on the wireless when it suddenly went off at a quarter past ten. We soon heard the wail of the sirens followed by heavy gunfire. We took the baby down to the basement, where the other two children were already fast asleep, and waited patiently for the raid to develop. Soon the night was full of angry sounds and we could feel the house shaken at intervals by gunfire or distant explosions. Above all we could hear the dreaded hum of planes overhead. "Perhaps they are our fighters" we said when we heard a plane diving particularly low, and smiled grimly when a shattering bang followed in its wake.

'I always feel rather restless during a raid and like to prowl about. Once when I looked out of the front door it appeared to be a bright moonlit night due to some flares hanging in the sky somewhere, though I could not see them. Then suddenly I saw a very pretty flare drop like hundreds of bright white balls falling gracefully to earth in a narrow stream. I had never seen one like that before. I then glanced out of the back door and saw several green balls hanging in an ominous sort of way over South Kensington. I supposed they were the flares responsible for the moonlight effect and perhaps markers for the bombers. In any case we were in the target area! I retired hastily to the basement to contemplate the infant, who had now woken up, my wife who was calmly sitting in a chair, and a stirrup pump, bucket of water and a hatchet that were ready by the door. I listened with amazement to my eldest daughter, aged 6, saying that she could not get to sleep because the baby was crying! A little later I looked out of the back door again and saw a fire had started quite close, as there was a faint glow and smoke was drifting over the house.

'The all-clear went about half past eleven. "I think I will go out and see where that fire is," I said, "I'll be back in a quarter of an hour." I went down the passage to the Earls Court Road and then up to the High Street, from where I could see the fire was near the Town Hall. I hurried on in the darkness passing many people, who were as eager as I to find out what had been hit. I saw the front of Barkers new building lit up by the fire and clouds of smoke rising from

behind the Town Hall. "Perhaps the Church has been hit," I thought. "It must be the Food Office," said someone to a friend nearby. "Good riddance," I thought, very irrationally, as I recalled the long queues and general hubbub that always seemed to prevail there. Then I saw the Church spire showing up white for a moment through the smoke. As I reached Barkers I could see that it was the Church that was ablaze.

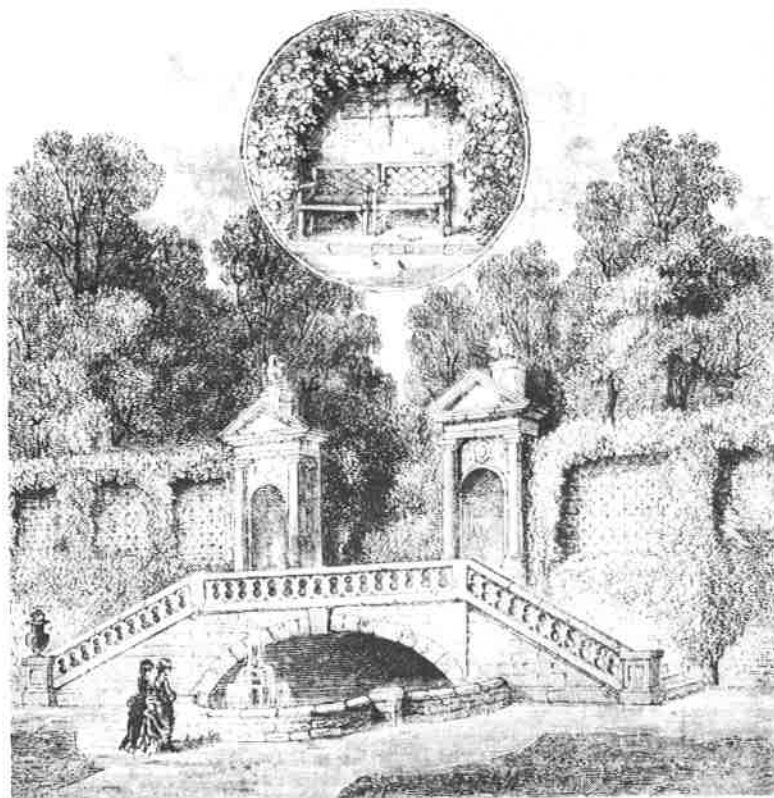
'What an awful, yet magnificent spectacle! Huge flames, 10 or 20 feet high, were licking the rafters and disappearing in billowing columns of smoke. Most of the smoke looked white as it was lit up by the fire, and three plane trees with bared branches were patterned against it. Most noble of all was the Church steeple, which seemed to rise defiantly to the sky. I solemnly watched the smoke pouring away towards the west, carrying with it a fine shower of sparks; and gazed fascinated at the progress of the fire as it ripped through the roof and sent the slates crashing to the ground.

'I noticed there was another fire further up Church Street which I learnt later was due to incendiaries hitting another church, St. Paul's of Vicarage Gate. I then looked around and saw an equally impressive sight. Hundreds of people were standing in a semicircle on the pavements opposite and round the Church, many, like myself, wearing steel helmets that glinted in the light of the fire. The shadows of these people were cast by the reflected light on to the buildings behind them, and I felt an unaccountable sense of comfort in the scene, which I realised later was due to the impression that the night lights of London were shining once again.

'I moved away from the crowd and crossing the High Street, made my way over the hose pipes up the passage between the Town Hall and the Library, where I saw the fire again from a less spectacular angle. I returned home, wondering if these fires would kindle a new spirit in the churches, and arrived soon after midnight to find everybody fast asleep.'



*Kensington Park Estate, Notting Hill.
Lithographic view of Stanley Crescent and Kensington Park Garden.
Drawn by Thomas Allom, c 1850.*



Rogers' Seat and Inigo Jones' Gateway, Holland House

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A Brief History of the Campden Charities

On a Tuesday in mid-April 1891 an audience gathered in St. Mark's Parish Rooms, St. Mark's Road, North Kensington, to hear a paper by Mr. Morton Daniel, a Churchwarden of St. Mary Abbots, Kensington, and a Trustee of the Campden Charities, on the subject of the Endowed Charities of Kensington. The report of the paper, which was printed in full, in the *Kensington News* of 25th April 1891 started as follows:

The Meeting was one of a series held under the auspices of the Kensington Ratepayers Association, and was presided over by Lord Chelmsford, G.C.B. There were present: The Rev. Canon Trench, Rev. C. Darby Reade, Rev. J. Wyndham, Rev. P. Gurney, Messrs. J. S. Hanson, H. D. Ellis, W. Kimpton, W. R. Hatton, A. Acrell, J. Ockenden, O.B., C. Harrison, P. Vargas, F. D. Head, C. J. Lockwood, Dallaway Swab-shield, and a large audience.

This paper, which was about 6,000 words in length, dealt almost entirely with the history of the Campden Charities. Although there have been great changes in the fabric, atmosphere, population and pace of life, in Kensington over the ensuing years, it is interesting to note that we are in a sense reperforming the events of that Tuesday evening long ago. I am to write the paper in place of Mr. Daniels; it is to be published in a journal instead of being read and subsequently reported in a newspaper, and it is being done under the auspices of the Kensington Society instead of the Kensington Ratepayers Association. The subject, however, the history of the Campden Charities, has not changed and nor I believe the motives of those who are interested to hear of it.

I start with one distinct advantage over Mr. Daniel, in that I have the full report from the *Kensington News* in front of me. I know I will be forgiven if I use this as a source and in some instance quote directly from it. I am indebted to him and the *Kensington News* for their help. I also start with one major disadvantage. I am restricted to 4,000 words as compared with his 6,000 and I have another 100 years of history to fit in!

The origins of Campden Charities lie in the Wills of Baptist Viscount Campden and Elizabeth Viscountess Dowager Campden who died in 1629 and 1643 respectively. The setting down of a chronological history of the Campden Charities from 1629 until the present day is too long and detailed a task for this short article. I thought, therefore, that I would confine myself to the aspects of the history of the Charities; dealing with one, the growth of the assets, in some detail, and the other two, the administration and the grant making, rather more briefly.

The original endowment of the Campden Charities came from three

sources. In 1629 Viscount Campden left £200, in 1643 a further £200 was bequeathed by his widow, and in 1651 a gift of land was made, valued at £45, traditionally said to have derived from Oliver Cromwell and since known as Cromwell's Gift. All these bequests were used to buy land, the income from which was to be used for charitable purposes. I shall deal with each bequest in turn and follow their development through to the present day.

Viscount Campden's £200 was left in his Will 'in trust to be employed for the good and benefit of the poor of the Parish forever as the Trustees should think fit to establish'. In 1635 the Trustees named in the Will used this £200, plus a further £20 of accrued interest, to purchase two closes of land, amounting to 14 acres, called Charecroft, which were situated on the South side of Shepherd's Bush Green. These closes were let for agricultural purposes and later on as substantial residences. Records show that it was let for £18 per annum in 1744, rising to £33 per annum in 1781 and then on a building lease at £103 per annum in 1802. It was added to in 1833 by the further purchase of half an acre, bought for £50 raised from voluntary contributions. Then in 1864 it was let on a 99 year building lease at £175 per annum rising to £870 per annum. In 1867 the London and South Western Railway compulsorily acquired part of this estate for use as Shepherd's Bush Station. Compensation of £10,000 was paid which was initially invested in Consols and later used in 1887 to purchase ground rents in the City of London. Charecrofts which by then consisted of neat rows of terraced houses remained as such until 1960. The whole estate which was producing ground rents of £1,167 per annum, was then let to developers on a 108 year lease for annual rent in 1964 of £15,000 rising to £27,500 per annum in 1983. The developers erected four tower blocks of flats and the Shepherd's Bush Shopping Centre on the site.

The development went well for a time but the collapse of the property market in the mid-seventies saw the managing company which owed the long leasehold of the shopping centre first being placed into receivership and then into liquidation. The property remained in the hands of the liquidators for some years as it could not be disposed of sufficiently well to repay the mortgagees. This state of 'suspended animation' resulted in a declining interest and a general state of malaise which the Trustees sought to rectify in 1982. After taking the advice of Counsel they instituted proceedings against the liquidators and subsequently the mortgagees for repossession of the long lease. After a series of complicated cases in the High Court, the Court of Appeal and the House of Lords, the Trustees secured a partial victory. Then in order to avert a further round of litigation the matter was settled by one of the mortgagees acquiring the Trustees' interest at a price which was very favourable to the Trustees. The Charecroft estate therefore passed out of the Trustees' control on 28th February 1986. The proceeds were used to invest in other properties and in stocks and shares. During the process of this litigation the Trustees secured a

'windfall' in rents from the Shopping Centre of some £230,000. This was deemed as income and was therefore available to use for charitable purposes. The Trustees sought out a project for this 'windfall', and together with Servite Houses are now in the process of constructing a sheltered home for the confused elderly in St. Mark's Road, W.10. This is being constructed on the site of the former Ladbroke Upper School and should be opened in 1991. It will be known as Alan Morkill House after a very long serving Trustee of the Charities who retired from the Board in 1985 at the age of 94 and sadly died in 1987.

The bequest of Lady Campden in 1643 was for a further £200 which was left 'upon trust and confidence that the legatees should therewith purchase lands of the yearly value of £10 at the least; one half whereof should be, from time to time, yearly forever for and towards the better relief of the most poor and needy people that be of good life and conversation, and that be inhabiting within the said parish of Kensington; and the other half part should be yearly and forever, to put forth one poor boy or more, being in the said parish, to be apprentice or apprentices.'

In 1644 the Trustees named in the Will bought for £200 a close of just over 5 acres known as Butts Field, a part of the Middle Quayle Field which was situated in the terms of those days, just to the South of the King's Highway and to the East of Hogmire Lane. This is more recognisable today as South of Kensington High Street/Kensington Gore and East of Palace Gate, and in fact covers what is now Hyde Park Gate and Kensington Gate.

The earliest record of income from the Butts Field Estate was that it was let at £22 per annum in 1744. In 1777 the part of the estate which is now Kensington Gate was 'taken' for the building of a workhouse. No rent was paid to the Charities for this until 1821 when proceedings were instigated and the Chancery Court fixed the rent at £40 per annum. Between 1821 and 1836 building leases were granted on the remainder of the estate and several substantial houses were erected. The total ground rents in 1832, for instance, amounted to £187 per annum. In 1849 the workhouse site was let on a 99 year building lease at £235 per annum and what is now Kensington Gate was built. The corner site (Palace Gate and Kensington High Street), where stood the Campden Arms public houses was sold to the Duke of Bedford in 1874 for £18,500 and numbers 12 and 13 Hyde Park Gate were sold for £22,500 in 1875. Thorney Court now stands on the corner site once occupied by the Campden Arms. (Progress!!?) The only other major structural change since 100 years ago is that when the leases of four houses fell in a new lease was granted to Trafalgar House Development Company in 1967. The resulting development, which is now Broadwalk House, brings in £5,589 per annum ground rent for the Charities. The other change has been financial. There were many leases in Hyde Park and Kensington Gate which were due to expire in 1998. Since 1982 the Trustees have had a policy of renewing these leases for a suitable premium to 2064. This

process which is about two thirds complete has realised a sum in the region of £7 million, which has been reinvested both in land and stocks and shares. There is still a further considerable sum to be realised between now and 1998.

Cromwell's Gift, otherwise known as the Gravel Pits Estate, was bequested in 1651. The site is occupied today by Clanricarde Gardens and 2-12 Notting Hill Gate in W.11. Income from this estate was £2 per annum in 1744, £14 per annum in 1745 and it was then let on a building lease for 81 years in 1787 for £38 per annum. The estate had a chequered history and fell into various states of dilapidation between 1820 and 1867 when it was again let on a building lease of 99 years at an annual rent of £1,040. These leases all terminated in 1867 and the gross income from the estate at this time was about £40,000. The estate had proved increasingly difficult to manage due in part to the 'looseness' of the old leases and in part to modern landlord tenant legislation. The Trustees decided therefore in 1967 to sell the whole of Clanricarde Gardens. This was achieved by tender and raised just short of 1 million pounds. Numbers 2-6 and 8-12 Notting Hill Gate, at the corner of Clanricarde Gardens and Notting Hill Gate are still retained by the Charities and produce a yearly income of about £120,000.

The foregoing is a brief account of the way in which the original endowed assets of the Campden Charities have developed. The principle has always been that capital assets should be retained and only that income which was surplus after managing these assets and administering the Charities, could be used for charitable purposes. This has meant that over the years, there has been a great deal of capital money arising from sales and leases, ect., which has needed to be reinvested. Some reinvestment has been into stocks and shares, but a considerable proportion has been put back into land. The Charities current asset base is now valued at some £25 to £30 million, just over half of which is invested in property. As well as retaining some of the land originally purchased in the 1600s as described above, the Charities now have shops and offices in London, East Anglia, on the South Coast and in the West Country.

Before I finish with property, there is one particular building which ought to be given special mention. This is known as the Campden Technical Institute and is situated adjacent to the Public Library in Lancaster Road, W.11. It was built by the Trustee at a cost of £3,295 in 1896. The money came partly from the Campden Charities, partly from a grant of £500 from the City Parochial Foundation (still a very large and active London charity) and partly from public subscriptions. The premises were used to provide boys with manual training in carpentry, drawing and modelling and girls with instruction in cookery, dressmaking and mending, drawing, 'vocal music and musical drill'. The Campden Technical Institute, financed by the Charities, was managed by a Committee made up of the Trustees and some 25 other persons interested in technical education. This management continued

until 1936 when the London County Council took over the administration and teaching. The recent history of the building is that it was used by the Inner London Education Authority, on lease from the Campden Charities, as a domestic science centre for Issac Newton School, opposite in Lancaster Road and then for Holland Park School, until 1988. It is currently held on Lease by the Education Department of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and is used for a miscellany of educational purposes.

I will now turn to the other two subjects, that I mentioned at the beginning of this article, namely the administration and grant making of the Charities over the years. Little is known about the very early times but what we do know seems to suggest that although there have been changes, upheavals and arguments over the intervening years the basic administration of the Charities is roughly the same now as it was in 1682. It is on record that in that year the estates described earlier in the article were conveyed to one Thomas Methwold and twelve other inhabitants, including the then Vicar and Churchwarden of Kensington, upon trust that they should from time to time let and dispose of the said premises for the most yearly profit and should bestow the same to the use, good and benefit of the poor of the town of Kensington aforesaid according to the true intentions of the wills of Lord and Lady Campden. This is still the position in 1991. The Trustees, who now number eighteen include the Vicar and two Churchwardens of St. Mary Abbots, and they administer the funds of the Charities in a very similar way to that set out in 1682.

As I have indicated previously the progress from 1682 to 1991 has not been one of smooth uncontroversial passage. The most dramatic event was that in 1742 a petition was made to the Lord Chancellor that all of the Trustees named in the indenture of 1682 were dead, without having conveyed the estates to any new Trustees. The last surviving trustee had left an infant as heir at law of all the Charities estates. The Court appointed sixteen new Trustees and included in the indenture a clause for replacing trustees and also ordered that the income from the estate should be applied to putting one or more boys of the parish to apprenticeship. History does not reveal how this state of affairs was arrived at or to what purpose the income in the intervening years had been put. The Campden Charities just survived but one wonders how many other endowments from those days were not so fortunate.

In 1810 and again in 1832 there were major reorganisations of the administration. Indeed on the latter occasion there appeared to be a dispute over the title of the estates between the Trustees and the Vestry Committee of the Parish of Kensington. Although the Charities office have the minutes of their meetings as far back as 1778 there is a gap between 1832 and 1841. The last record of the dispute between the Parish and the Charities is minuted on 29th March 1832 as follows:

'... and RESOLVED

That a Committee be appointed to inquire and report to this Board

as to what Property, Estates, or other Effects are possessed by them or are under their control. . . . And that such Committee do enquire and report generally as to all existing Leases, Contracts or other Agreements by virtue of which any Property is holden by this Board. And that the following Gentlemen do for such Committee viz:

The Venerable and Reverend Archdeacon Pott

Mr. Chesterton

Mr. Codd

Mr. Hutchins

Mr. Garrard

Mr. Shephard

Mr. Allason'

Although there are no recorded minutes there is evidence that the Charities continued to function between 1832 and 1841. This is in the form of a 'Record of Persons Relieved from the Funds of the Campden Charities 1832-1864', which is still held in the Charities offices.

The next development was due to the growth of Kensington and the emergence of other parishes in the District. Basically it seems that the new parishes, five in all, wanted a more direct share of the income. The incumbent and churchwarden of the then District Church at Brompton therefore petitioned the Court of Chancery to have the funds apportioned. On 23 December 1852 an Order was made, which was considered highly controversial at the time, dividing the income of the Campden Charities between six parishes—the lions share went to St. Mary Abbots—25 parts while St. Mary's West Brompton only received 6½ parts.

This division of the income among parishes did not last for very long. In 1879 on application by the Trustees to the Charity Commission the land was vested in the Official Custodian for Charities and a Scheme was made defining the make up and duties of the trustees, and directing how, in broad terms, the income should be applied. This Scheme was not entirely satisfactory, principally as it restricted the power of grant making, and Trustees thought unnecessarily, and was revised substantially in 1890.

This 1890 Scheme lasted, with minor amendments, until 1957 when that part of it which dealt with education was revised by the Minister of Education. Then the 1890 Scheme and the 1957 Scheme were used for relief of poverty and advancement of education respectively until March 1990 when the Charity Commission, at the request of the trustees, produced a single Scheme to cover both aspects of the Charities' work. Although these Schemes differed in some detail those parts which dealt with grant making have remained substantially the same in principal since 1890.

I shall now deal briefly with the way in which the income of the Charities has been used over the years for relieving need. From the days of Lord and Lady Campden there have always been two distinct areas of need to which the income has been applied. Lord Campden left his bequest for the poor while Lady Campden favoured educating the young. Prior to the 1890 Scheme there is evidence that both these activities were taking place. There is a detailed record for the year

1832 of the relief of poverty for instance by way of regular pensions, the annual allowance being £2 in those days, paid half yearly. There is also contained in the Annual Report of 1846 an account of premiums amounting to a total of £500 being paid for 'apprenticing poor boys'.

After 1890 there is almost a complete record of all charitable activities down to the present day. The 1890 Scheme and the current 1990 Scheme provides that half the income, after expenses, is devoted to Relief in Need and the other half to the Advancement of Education. The pattern of grant making has not altered much in principle over the last 100 years, although the amounts and 'needs' catered for have changed out of all recognition. I will give some comparisons between then and now of the way in which things have changed.

One of the methods of applying relief in need is the providing of annual pensions for life for old poor people. In 1846 the pensioners numbered 60 and received sums varying from £20 per annum down to £2 per annum at a total cost to the Charities of £445. In 1990 the average number of people receiving a Campden Pension was 650. Each of them were granted £260 per annum, paid in six instalments, and in addition received a birthday and Christmas gift, a television and licence and a visiting service and 'hot-line' to the office in case of dire need. A few were also provided with a holiday. The total cost of the Campden Pensions in the year 1990/91 will be about £225,000. Another way of applying charity which is permitted under the Scheme is the temporary relief of need among poor, sick individuals. In 1891 37 individuals were helped for 'Special Relief' costing £177.10.0; 6 persons were helped with 'outfits etc' for children costing £50 all told; and 7 people received grants for 'Special Infirmities' in the sum £73.4.0. The annual expenditure in this category, if I can still add £s.d., amounted to £200.14.0. In the financial year 1990/91, for comparison, the number of individual cases dealt with will number almost 600 and the total expenditure will be about £110,000.

In the field of education, as mentioned earlier, the Trustees have long been very active with apprentices. In 1846 there were 37 new apprentices appointed and this number gradually declined to 22 in 1908, 3 in 1924, 3 in 1943 until the present day when there are none. The Trustees soon found other ways of helping individuals with their education. As far back as 1901 the trustees were offering Exhibitions and Scholarships by competition to boys and girls wishing to enter Secondary Schools. Of the 31 boys and 19 girls competing for Scholarships in 1905 there were five awarded to boys, one from Fox School and one from St. Mary Abbot's included, and four for girls, one from Oxford Gardens School and one from Ashburton included. The award of such scholarships continued at an increasing level until the institution of universal secondary education obviated the need for it. Expenditure still continued, however, in assisting students with specialist and university education and in 1988 a new Scholarship Scheme was started with a view to providing places, awarded in competition but subject to means testing, at fee paying schools for

children with high potential either in academic subjects or the arts, including dancing and music. Total expenditure on grants to students including scholarships is likely to be about £275,000 in 1990/91. About 150 individual young residents of Kensington will have benefited in this year.

As well as providing assistance to individuals by way of relief and education the Trustees have a long history of making grants to other organisations which themselves provide such assistance. This practice started soon after the introduction of the 1890 Scheme with donations to hospitals, convalescent homes, dispensaries, district nurses associations and philanthropic societies. The practice was to issue 'Letters' to Kensington beneficiaries and by this means preferential, probably free, services were rendered by the organisation concerned. For instance in 1905, 46 residents convalesced at one of the five different convalescent homes all of which were on the coast. The Kensington Dispensary treated 117 beneficiaries by use of this 'Letter' system in the same year. These days the bulk of the Charities income is used for grants to Kensington based organisations. Due, however, to the introduction of universal education and the National Health Service there is much less demand these days directly in these areas. The Trustees have adopted a policy of trying to use their grants, sometimes in partnership with statutory or other bodies to secure resources which would otherwise be unforthcoming. Examples of this in recent years are the building of two nursery classrooms for Church Primary Schools; the initial three year revenue funding of a nursery centre; the long continued funding year by year of a proportion of the general running costs of over 60 Kensington based organisations varying from old peoples homes, day centres, pensioners clubs, youth clubs, play schemes and advice centres; and substantial help with modern expensive equipment for local hospitals. The trustees have also provided holidays for the old and disabled for many years now—over £71,000 was spent on them in 1989/90.

In summary therefore the Campden Charities grew from endowments, chiefly from Lord and Lady Campden made in 1629 and 1643. It is interesting to note that this family also made other endowments. The Parish of Campden in Gloucestershire benefited enormously and he acquired the Gainsborough Chapel of Chipping Campden Church as a place of burial for himself and his family in 1629. 'He and his Consort lie carved in marble on their splendid tombs, clad in their Jacobean court robes'. There is also the Hampstead Wells and Campden Trust, which is still very much alive and operates in a way similar to the Campden Charities in a part of Hampstead.

Their initial endowment then in 1651 amounted to 22 acres of land costing £465 and yielded in income something in the region of £20 to £30 per annum. Mr. Morton Daniel in his paper of 1891 declares:

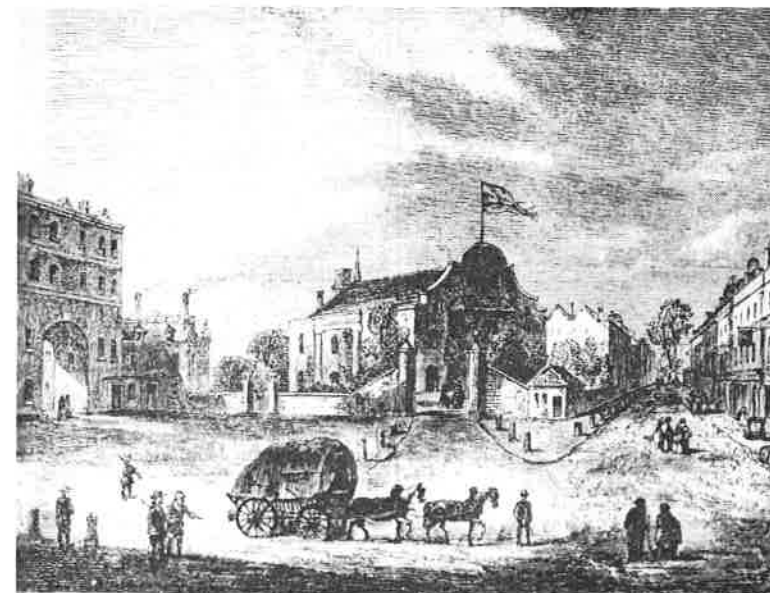
I hope you notice the anxious and thoughtful care which has been taken to secure that the funds shall be properly administered in

accordance with the true intentions of the original donors. . . . The gross annual income of the Campden Charities is now the magnificent sum of £4,382.19s.0d, all derived from the original investment of land in the middle of the Seventeenth Century.

He then goes on to say 'that he has pursued the subject long enough'. I shall take the cue from him therefore and end by saying that the value of the capital of the Campden Charities is now somewhere approaching £30 million and the income for the year 1990/91 is likely to be £1.7 million.

Mr. Daniel's final remark was to impress upon his audience that the Campden Charities had an office and a Clerk and that they were always ready to assist. The office, in those days, was in the Vestry of St. Mary Abbots Church. It has since moved to 5 Hogarth Road, Earls Court, via 62 Kensington Church Street, 1 Kensington Gate, and 66 Kensington High Street, and may soon move again to Notting Hill Gate. There is now a Clerk and a staff and they are just as anxious as their predecessors to help with any enquiry relating to relief in need or the advancement of education, within the former Royal Borough of Kensington.

P. R. Lucas,
Clerk to the Trustees.



Old Kensington Church, about 1750

Reports from Local Societies

ABBOTSBURY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

In addition to monitoring Town Planning Applications and considering the Unitary Development Plan so far as concerns its area (which is fully integrated in the Neighbourhood Watch Schemes) the problems with which the Association has dealt during 1990 include:

- (a) the arrangements to be made for Cable Television;
- (b) the resurfacing and repaving of private roadways in parts of its area;
- (c) supporting other Residents Associations where appropriate.

There was also the important and difficult problem of the Thames Water Authority Ring Main with a Pumping Station to be sited in a part of Holland Park fronting to Abbotsbury Road. On this the Association kept in touch with the Royal Borough, concurring in its opposition to the proposal; and also supported the Friends of Holland Park in their objection to the scheme and emphasis on the availability of other sites, one of which has now been officially adopted by the Water Authority.

The Association has installed a Bench in Holland Park in memory of its late first Chairman, Professor Russell Allen O.B.E., who held office for 15 years; and it is glad to report that, despite changes in occupation, the fact that many houses belong to companies, and others let, its membership has been maintained.

THE BOLTONS ASSOCIATION

In the course of 1990, a slightly firmer line by the Borough Planning Committee over unsatisfactory development has been detected while all 5 appeals against the Council's decision to refuse planning permission were dismissed.

Two successes were scored in The Boltons, both in cases of applications for highly undesirable rear extensions. In the one, the Association's comments resulted in a revised plan which was unobjectionable, in the other the application was refused. A controversial application for the linking of two houses—9 Tregunter Road and 10 Cathcart Road—by a series of rooms and a swimming pool under the existing garden was opposed; although to some extent our objections have been met the Association still opposes underground development.

Detailed comments have been made on the Conservation and Development and Transportation Chapters of the Unitary Development Plan. The former included an exhortation to make a firm commitment to adhere in future to stated policy; while in the latter

it was asked that a positive statement be made on the provision of relief for the Earls Court one-way system and for a policy for improvement on the West London Line.

Active participation in the Kensington and Chelsea Police Consultative Committee had been maintained.

Chairman: Mr. James Macnair, 29 Gilston Road, London S.W.10

Secretary: Miss Elizabeth Lowry-Corry, 60 Redcliffe Gardens, London S.W.10

BROMPTON ASSOCIATION

To the Association's relief the South Kensington Station development proposal was withdrawn in January 1990 and to date it has not been reinstated. On the dark side this may cause delay in modernisation of the station itself.

A large development on a site to the east, known as Brompton Cross, has since been proposed for a shopping mall, office block and some residential accommodation. The Association has had discussions with the developers, Chelsfield plc, and their architects, SOM, prior to formal submission of a planning application. The developers have promised a presentation of the proposals to our members at that time.

The DoE Inspector eventually approved, conditionally, two projects for Harrods Car Park in Brompton Place and although this has disappointed nearby residents the Association thought the schemes acceptable especially as no more traffic would be generated.

Now that the front facade of the V & A has been cleaned, the Committee considers its support of the advertisement hoardings justified.

The Association's AGM will be held towards the end of May 1991.

Hon. Secretary: Mrs Susan Walker, 15 Cromwell Road, S.W.7

CAMPDEN STREET PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Much of Campden Street has been developed in accordance with planning applications approved by the Royal Borough. So it is no surprise that during the past year there have been no further applications; but two cases of longer standing are still unresolved. One resident has appealed against the Royal Borough's refusal to allow the removal of a condition limiting the use of the architect's studio in part of his house to his own personal use as an architect and to allow general office use. The Society hopes the appeal will be dismissed. It has always stoutly opposed the introduction of commercial offices into this residential street.

The second case relates to the unauthorised addition on the third floor at No. 78. Planning permission for its retention was refused but before the enforcement notice could be issued, the owner alleged that it has the benefit of a determination pursuant to section 53 of the Planning Act, 1971 and does not require planning permission. The

Council does not agree and the case is still progressing through the High Court. The Society is opposed to any addition to any roofline and hopes that the Court will uphold the Council's view.

Chairman: J. H. Lidderdale

CORNWALL GARDENS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

The Association continues to monitor new developments in the area. In particular, we have made our objections known to the Council concerning the provision of pedestrian access from the St. Mary Abbots site into Cornwall Gardens Walk, the proposed exhibition hall and leisure centre in St. Stephens Precinct and the ghastly plans for an office block at 156 Cromwell Road.

We are increasingly concerned by the danger and disturbance caused by the use of local residential roads by commuter and commercial traffic and have supported the 'Grenville Place Rat Race' petition. We are pleased, however, that the Council have erected new 'No Through Road' signs to deter traffic attempting to reach Lexham Gardens via Cornwall Gardens. These have significantly reduced the number of errant tourist coaches and other traffic.

We have a particularly good relationship with the local Neighbourhood Watch. We have found it very productive to report on the Association's activities at the regular Watch meetings three times a year. In this way local residents are kept better informed of any current problems and have a chance to make their own contributions to help protect our environment.

Chairman: Robin J. Balmer

Secretary: Miss Ursula Overbury

EDWARDES SQUARE SCARSDALE AND ABINGDON ASSOCIATION

The principal issues of concern to ESSA during 1990 were the Unitary Development Plan and two major redevelopments:

Odeon Cinema. ESSA made representation at the public enquiry in January, objecting in particular to excessive height, density and office content. The appeal was dismissed.

St. Mary Abbots Hospital. Two further applications, with substantially increased densities, were lodged this year, both of which ESSA opposed vigorously. The higher densities represented an increase of over 100 dwellings, with unacceptable traffic implications for Marloes Road and resulting in the loss of the vista on to Stone Hall. Such matters concern us *all* and we hope for greater support from other Associations. Both applications were refused by the Planning Committee.

UDP Draft. ESSA submitted detailed comments on the Conservation and Development and Transportation draft chapters. We are pleased

to note that the Officers have decided to submit all chapters to a planning QC for advice.

Kensington High Street. Two battles lost were the proposed changes of use from Building Society and retail to restaurant use.

London Garden Squares. We continue to support efforts for the protection of our garden squares.

Sadly, David Cole, ESSA's founder, died in June. He had given valuable service for 20 years and will be greatly missed. Our Chairman, Antony Carr-Gomm, retired after 3 hard-working years and is succeeded by former Councillor, His Honour Judge Gordon.

Chairman: His Honour Judge Gordon, 7 Edwardes Square, W.8.

Hon. Secretary: Mrs Suzanne Anderson, 8 Phillimore Terrace, W.8.

KENSINGTON COURT RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Despite the more favourable climate of opinion nowadays in favour of conservation and environmental improvement, we have not made much progress in our area of late. Indeed there have been some setbacks.

Most recently the Planning Application Committee swept aside our strong objections, with other neighbouring Associations, to access to the east from the new development on St. Mary Abbots Hospital site. These objections were mainly on security grounds—why facilitate gratuitously the passage of criminals and undesirables through a new residential development whose security would be undermined by any escape route to the east? The battle is not yet lost—nor won.

Similarly an over-development in lieu of the inoffensive coffee shop in the passage from High Street to Kensington Court has been authorised. The Planning Committee said no *single* argument was strong enough to justify refusal. We thought there were already too many messy establishments there, too much litter, rubbish bags, noise, motorbikes and vehicles in what should be a quiet pedestrian way which has recently been beautified by expensive paving and street furniture.

The streets may be marginally cleaner but there is still abusive parking, dog and pigeon nuisance, rowdies at closing time and noisy vehicles late at night and early in the morning.

Vigilance is still needed—and sometimes I think a corps of vigilantes!

Chairman: Sir Ronald Arculus, 20 Kensington Court Gardens, W.8

KENSINGTON HIGH STREET STUDY GROUP

While developments at the Commonwealth Institute and the future of the Odeon Cinema remain long-term concerns, attention during the last year has focused on amenities and traffic flow in the High Street. The new litter bins have met with a mixed reception; the carefully-sited tree planting has been welcomed; the straight-over pedestrian crossings have proved a success. But the whole concept of 'setting a design framework for the High Street, always at risk from litter, forecourt trading and a multiplicity of display material, has now

been threatened by a random proliferation—outside the Council's control—of public telephone boxes located without any regard for their visual impact on the street scene.

The Study Group continues to monitor bus travel in the High Street. It strongly supported the Council's efforts to retain the C1 Hoppa route, which has proved so popular with local residents (and overseas visitors staying in Kensington hotels). And it is still pressing for modifications to the design of the single-decker Gold Arrow bus to give a safer and more comfortable ride for elderly people, mothers with small children, and laden shoppers.

Convenor: Richard Newcombe, 3 Earls Terrace, W8 6LP

THE LADBROKE ASSOCIATION

This year, as in the past, we have had some bad cases of attempted 'gap-filling'. It is the gaps in the terraces which give glimpses of the communal gardens half hidden within, and convey the idea of a miniature garden city. Build across the gaps, and you destroy one of the most original and delightful features of the neighbourhood.

The Council's own Conservation Area Policy Statement emphasised the need to prevent gap-filling. We are supporting the Council in a case expected to come up at a public enquiry in May. To help us, we have commissioned a planning consultant, Dr. John Parker, of Greater London Consultants.

Another threat to the environment is the massive complex of 'Health Care' flats which now dominate the streets south of Ladbroke Square. Applications have been made by the owners to build flats or offices on the site of the neighbouring Masonic Hall. We oppose both kinds of application, and we have commissioned Dr. Parker on this issue too.

We have held a watching brief on the conversion into flats of No. 1 Lansdowne Walk—a spectacular house built for himself by Sir Aston Webb. We tried to persuade both the Council and English Heritage to ensure that this building was preserved as a single unit. But we failed. The best we can now hope for is a sensitive conversion into flats.

Chairman: Thomas Pakenham

LEXHAM GARDENS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

As last year our Association (together with the Garden Committee) has been particularly concerned with two projects—the refurbishment of our gardens and negotiations with Taylor Woodrow with regard to the St. Mary Abbots site.

Work has now been completed on the new garden. New Victorian-style wrought iron railings have been installed with the assistance of a loan from the Council. The garden was completely re-landscaped and nearly 1,000 new plants and bushes purchased. The new garden was officially opened by the Mayor of the Royal Borough, Councillor

Jonathan Wheeler, at a well-attended garden party in June. Our residents seem well pleased with the new garden.

We were proud to receive four awards for the work: the London Garden Society Falkland Moore Cup and Gilt Medal for first prize in the All London Championships (Class 9 Special Facilities); the Brighter Kensington and Chelsea first prize for the best garden square; the Princess Alice Countess of Athlone Environment Award and the Kensington Society Award for Design. We would like to pay tribute to Mrs. M. Wooldridge who has retired as the Garden Committee Treasurer after more than a decade of service.

Work is now well under way on the Taylor Woodrow housing development on the site of St. Mary Abbots Hospital. We continue to be concerned with the density of the scheme. However, the quality of the buildings appears good. We look forward to a rapid conclusion of the scheme now that planning permission has been given for the whole site.

Chairman: Sir Cyril Taylor, Lexham Gardens Residents Association

NORLAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY

The Society continues to pursue actively the principle that development should enhance or protect, not simply harm, conservation areas. We have given support to local residents who are resisting a planning application for the Portland Arms/1 Penzance Place by Joe Allen Restaurants Limited. If successful this development will distort life in an attractive but already crowded corner of the conservation area and such commercial development in a primarily residential area is contrary to District Plan policy.

Our Annual Lecture by Sebastian Valkenburg on 'Artists' Houses in Kensington' was held at the Halsey Ricardo house, 8 Addison Road and was very well supported by members and friends.

St. James's Church, the visual planning centre of this area continues its financial struggle to keep its building viable and to enhance its exterior we have recently paid for the painting of its notice boards.

We continue to be encouraged by local support and in common with likeminded associations are only too aware that constant vigilance is essential to maintain a reasonable balance between conservation and development.

Chairman: Mrs. A. Fenhalls, 15 St. James's Gardens, W11 4RE

ONSLOW NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION

Since last year, we have had an addition to our 'problem sites', the so called Brompton Cross project. This faces an area along the north side of Pelham Street and forms a continuation to the South Kensington Station site. The latter is the subject of a redesign by the architects, Scott, Brownrigg and Turner, and to date no details have been made available. Thus the monitoring of the new Brompton Cross project

is doubly important because approvals here will set a precedent for its neighbour. However, we are doubly fortunate, the architects are the world renowned U.S. firm S.O.M., the developers are trying to be helpful and *once again* much of the detailed study work is being taken up by our neighbours, the Brompton Association in conjunction with the Thurloe Estate. If all goes well, we should have a worthy addition to our area.

News of the Royal Brompton Hospital north site is that the Council has prepared a design brief as guidance for prospective purchasers and we have been consulted during its preparation. The bulk of the buildings have by now been vacated but so far there has been no movement in the sale of the site.

During the year we have had the great pleasure of having a talk at our A.G.M. from Mrs. Esteve-Coll, Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum and in June we held our annual garden party, this year a change of venue to Mrs. Crossley's pretty garden in Selwood Place.

Chairman: Hugh Brady, 16 Selwood Terrace, London SW7 3QG

PEMBRIDGE ASSOCIATION

The Association has continued to stress to the Council its concern at the desecration being caused by its failure, particularly in Westbourne Grove, to resist the destruction of front boundary walls. We feel that the creation of off-street parking is vandalism and does not even increase overall space available for parking. We have also urged that reinstatement of front balustrades be made mandatory when negotiations over planning applications take place.

A firm stand has been urged against the developer of 1A Linden Gardens, where the consented plans have been blatantly disregarded. A plea for a strengthening of enforcement procedures has also been made with regard to the continued existence of the illegal illuminated box signs and awnings over hotel entrances in Pembridge Gardens.

On a more positive note, the Council has, in response to a request from the Association, dug 7 sites for much needed trees in Pembridge Gardens: we shall shortly be appealing for funds to enable us to buy and plant them. Also promised is a replacement for the ugly pre-fab lavatories in Westbourne Grove, and the Association is involved in discussions over the design.

Cable TV is coming to the area, and consultations with Videotron Communications Ltd. over the siting of their boxes have been taking place.

A successful garden party was held in the gardens in Pembridge Square in June, and this year's is to be held at the same place at 6 p.m. on Saturday 22nd June: all are welcome.

Chairman: William Clarke

VICTORIA ROAD AREA RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

1990 was dominated by major developments outside our area—St. Mary Abbots Hospital site, Waitrose and St. Stephen's Precinct, traffic issues and slow progress on the environmental improvement front.

St. Mary Abbots Hospital generated considerable anxiety about parking problems and reduced security resulting from pedestrian access to the development from Kelso Place. It was hoped that the bomb incident in Kelso Place and the developer's concern for security would ensure its deletion from a new scheme. Indeed it was until the Council demanded its withdrawal and substituted one with access to Kelso Place instead. We regret being forced to fight the Council who are imposing this access against the wishes of those who would stand to gain most—the residents of Kelso Place—in favour of the 'freedom to roam'!

The proposal for the former Waitrose site was permitted, despite the loss of retail floorspace. However, the current property recession has meant no action.

Traffic in Launceston Place/Greville Place gave rise to a petition, but the introduction of road humps in Launceston Place appears to have been successful. Other streets will be seeking similar treatment.

The removal of parking signs to lampposts, railings and walls, originally approved in September 1988 has still not happened, but is now imminent. The Association has volunteered to pioneer improvements to street furniture.

Chairman: Kenneth Woodward-Fisher

Hon. Secretary: Anne Woodward-Fisher 14 Albert Place, W.8

Proposed Constitution of The Kensington Society

- 1 The name of the Society shall be The Kensington Society.
- 2 The objects of the Society shall be to preserve and improve the amenities of Kensington for the public benefit by stimulating interest in its history and records, promoting good architecture and planning in its future development and by protecting, preserving and improving its buildings, open spaces and other features of beauty or historic or public interest.
- 3 MEMBERSHIP. The membership shall comprise Ordinary Members, Corporate Members and Affiliated Societies, i.e. amenity societies for areas within Kensington who apply for affiliation with the Society and are accepted by the Executive Committee.
- 4 SUBSCRIPTIONS. Corporate members shall pay a minimum annual subscription of £25. Ordinary members shall pay a minimum annual subscription of £10. Affiliated Amenity Societies shall pay an annual subscription of £10. Subscriptions are payable on 1st January each year. The foregoing minimum rates may be varied from time to time by resolution of the Members in general meeting.
- 5 THE OFFICERS. The officers of the Society shall be the President, one or more Vice-Presidents, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee, the Hon. Secretary, the Hon. Treasurer and such further honorary officers as the Executive Committee may from time to time appoint.
- 6 THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. The Executive Committee shall consist of not more than twelve members including the Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer.
- 7 (a) The Executive Committee shall be the governing body of the Society. It shall have power to (i) Make bye-laws; (ii) Co-opt members and fill vacancies on the Executive Committee or among the officers of the Society that may arise for the current year; (iii) Take any steps they may consider desirable to further the interests and objects of the Society.
 (b) A quorum of the Executive Committee shall consist of not less than five members.
 (c) Not less than three Executive Committee Meetings shall be convened in any one year.
- 8 THE COUNCIL. The Council shall consist of not more than thirty members. They shall be appointed by the Executive

Committee. The function of the Council shall be to support the Executive Committee in any matters relevant to the objects of the Society.

9 GENERAL MEETINGS.

- (a) An Annual General Meeting of members of the Society, of which not less than 28 days' notice shall be given to members, shall be held in each calendar year at which the Executive Committee shall submit a Report and an audited Statement of Account for the year to the previous 31st December.
- (b) Other General Meetings of members may be convened from time to time by the Executive Committee on not less than 14 days' notice to members.
- (c) The date, time and place of each General Meeting shall be fixed by the Executive Committee, and the Chair shall be taken by the President or in his absence by some other Officer of the Society nominated by the Executive Committee.
- (d) Twenty persons present, being Ordinary Members or authorised representatives of Corporate Members or Affiliated Societies, shall form a quorum at a General Meeting.
- (e) Resolutions of the members in General Meeting shall (except where otherwise stated in these Rules) be passed by a simple majority of members present and voting on a show of hands, each members having one vote. Corporate members and Affiliated Societies must notify the Hon. Secretary of the Society in writing of the persons authorised to receive notice, attend and vote on their behalf, failing which they shall not be so entitled.

10 ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

- (a) The election of Officers of the Society (other than the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee) and of members of the Executive Committee shall be effected by resolution of the Members of the Society at the Annual General Meeting, and the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee shall be effected by resolution of the Executive Committee at its first meeting after the Annual General Meeting.
- (b) Subject to paragraphs (c) and (d) below, any Ordinary Member shall be eligible for election as an Officer of the Society or as a member of the Executive Committee.
- (c) Candidates for such election, other than those standing for re-election under paragraph (e) below, must be supported by nominations signed by two other Members, which nominations must reach the Hon. Secretary not less than fourteen days before the Annual General Meeting.
- (d) In the case of election as an Officer, the candidates must also

be approved by the Executive Committee, which approval may be conferred either before the Annual General Meeting or at the first meeting of the Executive Committee thereafter. If such approval be withheld the office in question may be filled by the Executive Committee for the current year.

- (e) Unless curtailed by death or resignation or under paragraph (i) below, the tenure of office of the persons elected shall be—
- (i) in the case of the President, until the third Annual General Meeting after his election;
 - (ii) in the cases of the Vice-President(s), the Hon. Secretary and the Hon. Treasurer, indefinite;
 - (iii) in all other cases, until the next Annual General Meeting after their election;
- but in cases (i) and (iii) those vacating office shall be eligible for re-election.
- (f) The tenure of office of any Officer of the Society other than President may be terminated at any time by resolution of the Executive Committee.

- 11 ALTERATION OF THE RULES. No rule shall be altered or revoked except by a resolution of the members in General Meeting passed by a majority consisting of not less than two-thirds of the members present and voting.
- 12 DISSOLUTION OF THE SOCIETY. The Society shall not be dissolved unless a majority of two-thirds of the subscribing members signify their approval of such a course by means of a postal ballot taken after receipt by the said members of a statement by the Executive Committee, whom failing by not less than ten Ordinary Members or the President of the Society, setting forth a summary of the arguments for and against such a course and their or his views thereon.
- 13 SURPLUS ASSETS. In the event of such dissolution the surplus funds (if any) of the Society may be transferred to such one or more charitable bodies, having objects similar to or reasonably consistent with those of the Society, as may be chosen by the Executive Committee and approved by the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales.

4th February 1991

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

Statement of Accounts for the year 1989-90

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY
BALANCE SHEET
as at December 31st 1990

1989 £		£	1990 £
	Assets		
	Office Equipment at cost		
12	(less depreciation)		9.00
	Bank Balances—Current A/C's		
1674	General Fund	2266.47	
249	Princess Alice Memorial Fund	1310.19	
			3576.66
	Deposit A/C's		
4762	General Fund	6959.09	
2486	National Savings Bk Inv Fund	2486.51	
1409	Princess Alice Memorial Fund	0.00	
			<u>9445.60</u>
10592			13031.26
(4)	Sundry Liabilities		<u>(142.25)</u>
10588			<u>12889.01</u>
	Accumulated Funds		
8946	Balances at January 1st 1990	8899.87	
	Surplus (Deficit) from Income		
(46)	and Expenditure A/C	2688.95	
8900			11588.82
	Princess Alice Memorial Fund		
2175	Balances at January 1st 1990	1688.38	
	Surplus (Deficit) from Income		
(487)	and Expenditure A/C	(388.19)	
1688			<u>1300.19</u>
10588			<u>12889.01</u>

G. CHRISTIANSEN, Hon, Secretary
GEORGE POLE, Chairman

In accordance with instructions given, the foregoing Accounts have been prepared from the accounting records of the Kensington Society and from information and explanations supplied.

Barclays Bank plc
35 Notting Hill Gate
London
W11 3HJ

A. J. SNELLING
Private Banking Manager
19th January 1991

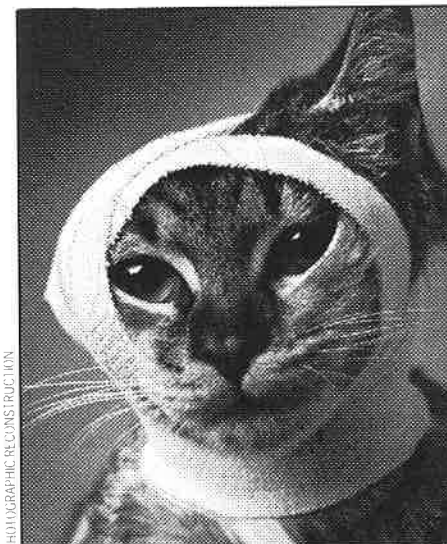
THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
for the year ended December 31st 1990

1989 £		1990 £
	Income	
3255	Subscriptions	3465.85
	Other Receipts	
590	Profit from Sales	0.00
389	Interest Received	727.47
688	Receipts from Visits	625.40
1250	Advertising in Annual Report	1195.00
925	Donations	1400.00
	Income Tax Refund	189.29
7097		<u>7603.01</u>
	Expenditure	
1147	Printing, Typing and Stationery	812.06
1038	Postage and Telephone	943.62
1654	Producing Annual Report	2286.00
287	Professional Charges	0.00
61	Sundry Expenses	65.97
217	Subscriptions and Donations	180.00
180	Coach Visits, etc	418.03
16	Advertising	0.00
109	Meeting Expenses and Presentations	205.38
85	Sale Expenditure	0.00
3	Depreciation	3.00
2346	Outstanding Liabilities	0.00
7143		<u>4914.06</u>
(46)	Surplus (Deficit) to Balance Sheet	2688.95

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY
PRINCESS ALICE MEMORIAL FUND
for the year ended December 31st 1990

1989 £						1990 £
	Income					
162	Donations Received	3	3	3	3	314.50
98	Interest Received	1	1	1	1	84.34
260						398.84
	Expenditure					
	Cost of Memorial Garden					
403	Plants, Fertilisers	..	..	..	..	524.82
142	Garden Help	..	..	..	..	185.00
138	Repairs to Irrigation	..	..	..	..	0.00
64	Sundry Items	77.21
747						787.03
(487)	Surplus (Deficit) to Balance Sheet	(388.19)

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THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

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of
(Address)

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IN WITNESS whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this.....day of.....19.....

Signed, sealed and delivered by the above-named COVENANTOR in the presence of

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