

THE
**Kensington
Society**



**Annual Report
2004**

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Front cover picture shows the 'bullnose' frontage of South Kensington Underground Station, drawn by Francis Machin. The publication *A Solution for South Kensington*, in which this and other images appear, was compiled by the Brompton Association with the support of the Kensington Society, the Chelsea Society, the Knightsbridge Association and SKUD (the South Kensington Underground Development Action Group).

THE

Kensington Society

15 Kensington Square, W8 5HH

The objects of the Society are 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.267778

Annual Report 2004

The Kensington Society

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From the President

The Society tries to maintain a proper balance between its main objectives: 'stimulating interest in Kensington's history and records' on the one hand, and 'protecting, preserving and improving its buildings and open spaces' on the other.

In this space, I also ring the changes. Last year I wrote mainly of the Holland Park Circle of artists and their patrons. This was echoed in the major exhibition of G.F. Watts' portraits at the National Portrait Gallery, and was also complemented by Michael Winner's talk at the last AGM, when he told us he would be leaving his historic house to the Council. Also, the Council has itself published a useful paper on the artists' studios of Kensington, and the need to preserve them.

This time I will range over contentious local issues, mostly dealt with in more detail in the Chairman's Report and others in this issue.

A recent report on the Venetian flooding problem described that city as 'under siege' from water and winds, erosion, pollution, global warming and the weight of mass tourism. There are times when Kensingtonians have a similar sinking feeling. The Mayor of London has, undemocratically, ignored widespread and continuing protests against the extension of the Congestion Charge zone, which the Council has been stoutly resisting. Mobile phone mast applications proliferate, and residents are largely sceptical of assurances that the damage to health comes from hand-held phones themselves, rather than from masts. How many health scares have been pooh-poohed at first and proved true later on? Post Office closures will cause widespread inconvenience, even hardship, especially to those no longer young. Developers continue to threaten our well-being, either with over-sized projects as at South Kensington station, or in the drastic refurbishment of houses or buildings which can cause nuisance to neighbours and to traffic. Despite the expensive face-lift to our High Street, there is still too much litter and chewing gum and too many traffic hold-ups. Nightclubs and bars proliferate and seek ever-longer opening hours. The effect of new licensing arrangements

may be to allow too many late hours for pubs, clubs, bars etc. Residents will have to be more vigilant.

This Society joined with other local societies in opposing over-sized redevelopment of the South Kensington station site, and the project has had to go back to the drawing board. Future plans may be constrained by the Grade II* listing the station was subsequently awarded. The highly controversial and costly spiral addition to the V&A Museum by Libeskind has been dropped by the Trustees. The Diana memorial feature (now a water-channel rather than the expected fountain), was moved at our insistence from Kensington Gardens to Hyde Park, where it has had even more teething troubles than anticipated – a 'tragi-comedy' as the Friends of Hyde Park termed it. The worst feature of all three Diana memorials (the playground, the walkway and the water feature) is that the Chancellor of the Exchequer made no provision for maintenance costs. The rising bills will have to be met from the regular, meagre budget of the Royal Parks. It is also wrong in principle that the Royal Parks should be obliged to earn money by staging unsuitably large and destructive events. Will the invasion of the Borough by big American casino operators be our next problem?

On the other hand, we must think positive, in order to offset these negative factors. The variety of cultural and educational assets in Kensington is exceptional, especially when added to those in Chelsea. Our parks are the envy of the world, for their largely unspoiled acreage of simple grass and trees, embellished by stretches of water and enlivened by flowers and shrubs and flowering trees. We visit other European cities and admire their historic centres, but visitors from abroad are always highly impressed by our parks, gardens and garden squares. They do not, however, preserve themselves.

So let me end on this more sanguine note. The negative trends we must continue to resist where and how we can, in the belief that widespread public concern about threats to our amenities and well-being does sometimes succeed in warding off the undesirable.

Sir Ronald Arculus,
Chairman

Post script: This report has to cover both of the objectives quoted in my opening paragraph above. There is always plenty of material on the practical problems we face at any given time. But it is harder to come by interesting historical or cultural items about Kensington. Belinda Norman-Butler, with her long memory and keen sense of history, has in the past contributed valuable material. If any other readers have material in documents, letters or in their own recollections, please offer them to our Editor. This side of the Annual Report is important, and needs to be constantly nourished and enriched.

AGM 2004

The Society's **Annual General Meeting** will take place on **Wednesday 27 April**, at the **Maria Assumpta Centre, 23 Kensington Square, London W8**. Doors open at 6.30 and the meeting will begin at 7pm. This year's principal speaker will be **Sir Malcolm Rifkind**, whose subject will be '**Caring for Kensington**'.

Chairman's Report 2004

An eventful and exceedingly busy year. There has been a large variety of major issues – from South Kensington station to licensing policy, and waste management strategy – each of which has required our input.

South Kensington station has been a challenge, and so far a success. The storm of protest at the 143-foot high glass elliptical office tower, led by this Society and totally supported by the Brompton Association and the Chelsea Society, brought withdrawal of the scheme by the developer, and an understanding that they would return with a much more modest proposal. No scheme has yet emerged. We now aim to open discussions with London Underground, in the hope that the alternative vision for the station publicised last year by the Brompton Association and co-sponsored by the Kensington Society and by the Chelsea Society, will inspire the owners to opt for an imaginative scheme that would delight us all. We would look for a lively and distinguished proposal of modest scale for this site of national and international significance. Any such plan needs to take into account a total re-configuration of the present traffic system in relation to the new Exhibition Road scheme, bearing in mind also the need to integrate buses fully into this major transport interchange node.

The **Victoria and Albert Museum Spiral** project was formally abandoned by the V&A Trustees in early September 2004, since public funding was not forthcoming. The withdrawal is in effect a vindication for this Society, the Chelsea Society and the Brompton Association, all of whom had opposed this proposal, which was considered to be highly intrusive within an area of public dignity and architectural restraint. As an architectural solecism of a particularly time-limited kind it would soon have become a grave embarrassment to Council and residents alike. We shall do everything that we can to encourage a building of architectural distinction to link the main Aston Webb building with the Henry Cole Wing, while retaining the Aston Webb screen.

It was probably due to our misgivings, freely expressed to RBKC, over the way in which the RBKC Planning Services Committee decided to renew permission for the Spiral, that a new Major Planning Applications Committee has recently been set up by the Council. This we hope will ensure that such major and potentially damaging applications receive the expertise and full consideration that the applicants and we, the residents, deserve.

The Vicarage Gate Care Home saga continues. RBKC has issued a Supplementary Planning Guidance on Accommodation for the Elderly – now, after consultation, formally part of the Unitary Development Plan. This, with other documentation, does much to support our position. The owners persist in seeking to develop the site for residential purposes, while this Society and residents (as witnessed by a massive petition of some 3,000 names) wish change of use to be refused, which the RBKC Planning Services Committee has upheld. The situation is both complex and fluid, and we shall report more fully on it at the AGM in April. Members may be assured that we have objected vigorously at every stage to change of use, and that we intend to support the re-emergence of the Vicarage Gate site as a care home, in every way open to us.

The extended Congestion Charging Zone continues greatly to concern us. Having been voted against by Londoners, and opposed vigorously by the Royal Borough, the Mayor of London (after his exercise in democracy) is yet of a mind to proceed with it. Final decisions have by no means been made: an edict for or against it is some months ahead, and that will be against a background of protest and negotiation.

Our principal concerns remain the extra charge to residents, the charge to those outside the proposed extended zone when visiting residents, the loss of parking meter revenue, the deleterious effect on businesses, and the exclusion of parts of the north and west sections of the Royal Borough. We do not believe that the extension is necessary in a residential area, and we understand that revenue will by no means compensate for expenditure. It is above all an ill-conceived and undemocratic scheme which we deeply deplore and vehemently oppose.

If the scheme is implemented, the **West London Tram Route**, also a brainchild of the Mayor of London and the apparatchiks at City Hall, will cause major traffic pollution and noise problems for RBKC residents, let alone for the wretched residents of areas along its proposed route, whose fate it will be to suffer 'alternative traffic measures'. This means, of course, a steady stream of traffic, heavy and light, passing their homes. Our principal concern in RBKC must be the proposed closure of the northern arm of Shepherd's Bush Green to all but trams, thus displacing all two-way traffic onto its southern arm. Given present one-way congestion in the southern arm, this is a perfect recipe for disastrous back-up problems in all the service roads leading into and out of Shepherd's Bush Green and the Shepherd's Bush roundabout, not least Holland Park Avenue and Holland Road (already choked at certain times of the day); and, as a consequence, the surrounding streets. We have responded in these terms to the consultation exercise. We understand that the RBKC Council is totally opposed to the proposals and is acting accordingly. We are grateful for the Council's support.

Post Office closures: The Society has had its input into the protest. Campaigners, with our entire support, are taking opposition forward in a highly informed and professional manner. Though the Post Office consultation exercise was later found to be flawed by the courts, nevertheless five post offices in the Royal Borough have since been closed. Certainly an anti-social and unnecessary measure. (See also Victoria Road Area Residents' Association report.)

Mobile phone masts: A special RBKC Overview and Scrutiny Committee heard evidence from four experts on 20 October 2004 before an invited audience. The upshot was predictably inconclusive. Masts and base stations put out a very low-power beam – no more than a 60 watt bulb. Exposure of the public to radio-frequency from this source is well below international guidelines, and the beam is not therefore held to be harmful. As yet, however, there is no research on health related to current base stations, and a Dutch study suggesting effects from 3G base stations in Switzerland needs replicating.

Nothing is yet known about the cumulative effect of present and escalating radio-frequency beams, nor about the effects of length

of exposure. Since the Royal Borough is the most densely-populated part of the UK – and possibly Europe – any future effect may well be multiplied in our local population. For example, research in Sweden indicates that some 3.5 per cent of the population is electro-sensitive. That, on the UK national scale of 60 million, translates into some 2.1 million people; not a negligible figure. The problem, exacerbated by the erosion of public confidence in national politicians and in scientists in relation to such crises as asbestos, thalidomide, tobacco and BSE, is compounded by the arbitrary decision of HMG to overturn the recommendation of the Stewart Report that masts should be subject to the usual planning rules.

The evidence presented to the Committee was useful and objective, though it did little to assuage the concerns of the audience. The RBKC Council is to be congratulated and thanked for organising it. Not an easy task. It is worth adding that a fear of health implications from radio masts has, in the face of HMG rulings, been held by the courts to be a material factor in considering applications. That may be worth very little now that a judge has found that the proximity of schools is no bar to the placing of radio masts.

Since public anxiety remains, the best defence appears to be public concern, firmly and consistently stated, both as to the principle of unlimited roll-out of current and 3G masts, and on particular applications for masts in areas of high or vulnerable population. Courteous but firm protest to the site owners is sometimes successful. It should be noted that a group of MPs is lobbying for the inclusion of masts within the normal planning rules. The experts tell us that in 2004 there were some 40,000 base stations in the UK. With 3G additions this number will rise to 48,000 in 2007. The concerns remain.

The **Local Development Framework (LDF)**, due to replace the Unitary Development Plan (UDP), has long been trumpeted by the Government. Consultation with local societies has now been initiated, and this Society hopes to play a major role in its design and drafting. We particularly wish to see the existing UDP provisions of our built environment incorporated into the LDF so far as the legislation permits, and we shall not forget that 75 per cent of the Royal Borough

is covered by Conservation Areas.

Other specific planning concerns are reported on by the Chairman of our Planning Committee elsewhere in this Report. It is good to note that the Colville Gardens Conservation Area has now formally been so designated.

Conservation processes (mostly set in train by HMG) engage the Society much more than formerly. This year we have commented on RBKC draft statements on licensing policy; arts strategy; public consultation principles; municipal waste management strategy; also on draft supplementary planning guidance on accommodation for the elderly; public art; artists' studios; radio masts and antennae, and on the borough tree strategy. We have also responded to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on its enquiry into the role and effectiveness of CABE (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment). This enquiry is of considerably more importance than residents might generally suppose, since CABE formed part of our concern over the egregious but now withdrawn proposals for South Kensington station. We have also responded to HMG's Heathrow night flights consultation document. If societies such as ours are to remain relevant and respected within an ever-more complex planning environment, we have to engage at every level, and increasingly at the most senior and national levels. This your Society will do, especially bearing in mind that the Royal Borough comprises sites and buildings of national – and even international – significance.

We have again set up the Kensington Society School Prizes. This time two First Prizes of £200 each and two Second Prizes of £100 each are being offered. They will be awarded to pupils aged 12-13 and 14-15 during the school year 2004-5 attending any secondary school, state or independent, situated within the former Royal Borough of Kensington, for essays imagining themselves present in Leighton House or in Kensington High Street on Monday 28 June 1897. This is a fascinating date, chosen for reasons which members may enjoyably guess. The results will be announced and the prizes awarded at our AGM in April 2005. As last year, the prizes will be funded from Mrs Christiansen's generous bequest to the Society.

The Website has been updated and remodelled thanks to the generous expertise and assistance of Cllr David Campion, now Cabinet Member for Corporate Services. We are most grateful to him. It is updated as regularly as busy schedules permit. The address is www.kensingtonsociety.org Please explore it. Members' comments for improvements will always be welcome.

We continue to work with the **Chelsea Society** and the **Brompton Association**, and as occasion requires, with other adjacent and affiliated societies. This has proved immensely useful for the causes we espouse, both in sharing experience and expertise and for the added pressure we can exert, not least in major applications, like South Kensington station and the V&A Spiral.

We have co-opted three new members onto the **Executive Committee** in place of two members, David Meggitt and Robert Milne-Tyte, both of whom felt obliged to resign owing to changed personal circumstances. We are sorry to lose them, David Meggitt as Hon. Treasurer and Robert Milne-Tyte as Editor of the Annual Report and Minutes Secretary. Their regular, loyal and professional support over many years has been invaluable to the smooth running of the Society, and we should all be deeply grateful to them. Anthony Lee joins us as Hon. Treasurer; he also represents the Society on the Post Office closures issue. Caroline Shaw, a professional editor, joins us as Editor of the Annual Report. Loveday Waymouth joins us as Minutes Secretary, also now representing us as a Residents' Reviewer for the Council. We are pleased to have them with us, and we welcome their professional and enthusiastic commitment to the aims of the Society.

We lose, with regret, Susan Lockhart, who has resigned on account of her many demanding duties elsewhere in the Royal Borough, and particularly in relation to the parish of St Mary Abbots. We are grateful indeed to her for her long-term commitment to the Society and for all that she has done for it.

Once more I underline my plea for **new, active and younger members**. Again, a significant number of new members joined this year. Our membership stands at just over 600, but we need always to increase our numbers to ensure that we maintain and augment our voice with RBKC Council and with HMG. Please, therefore, make a

deliberate and sustained effort this coming year to approach likely new members. You will be surprised and gratified to discover how many want to join once they are informed of the Society's aims, activities, events and achievements. Membership forms and details are available from the Membership Secretary, 2 Campden Hill Court, Observatory Gardens, London W8 7HX.

We are grateful to Savills for generously supporting the cost of producing this Annual Report.

Robin Price

ANNUAL REPORT CONTRIBUTIONS

Anyone wishing to submit an article for publication in next year's Annual Report is requested to do so by October 31. Contributions should not exceed 1,500 words, and should relate to aspects of life in Kensington, past, present or future. The decision whether or not to publish will rest with the Editor, although, where necessary, contributors will be offered guidance to enhance the likelihood of publication. Articles should be addressed to the Hon Secretary, Mrs Ethne Rudd, at 15 Kensington Square, W8 5HH.

Secretary's View 2004

As always it has been a very busy year. We have had several important changes of personnel. David Meggitt, who has done such stalwart work as Treasurer, has married, had a baby and moved to Ealing (as so many of the young people are forced to do these days). We thank him for all that he did for us and wish him the best of luck in his new role as father. His replacement is Anthony Lee, who has joined the Executive Council and thrown himself into the work of the Society.

Secondly we said farewell to Robert Milne-Tyte, who has edited this report since Gay Christiansen gave up as Editor. We thank him for his major contribution and quite understand that he feels he needs to spend more time on writing books, which is his major interest. He has been succeeded by Caroline Shaw. We also have another new member of the Executive Committee, Loveday Waymouth, who has taken over from Robert Milne-Tyte as the minute-keeper at our meetings. We are most grateful to her for coming and filling in the gap.

The preservation of trees in the Royal Borough is still a major concern. Where there is a planning application, residents should be aware that a preservation order can be overridden as a result of the developer's report and should keep a special watch to alert the Tree Preservation Department at the Council if they feel it necessary. The membership of the Society continues to show a healthy increase, but we always need to expand the Society and any member who can distribute leaflets about the Society in Kensington should stock up. Finally our new prospective parliamentary candidate, Sir Malcolm Rifkind, will be giving the talk at our next AGM on Wednesday 27th April. The title he has chosen is "Caring for Kensington". We hope to see you all then.

Ethne Rudd

Environment Awards 2004

The Council makes annual awards to schemes which it considers set an example in their inherent quality and respect for, or contribution to, their setting.

This year, awards were given to the following:

3 Latimer Place W10

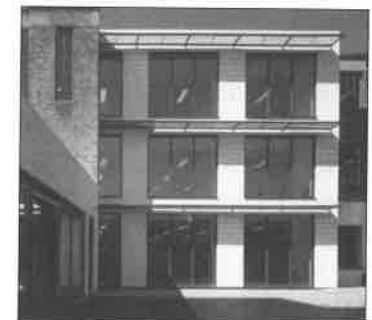
Award for Commercial Development

Architects: Stiff & Trevillion

Judges' comments: *"Partial re-use, partial reconstruction... very successful. The emphasis of the design is on the elegant white composition of modern 'cube' buildings in harmony with each other."*



Before



After



Before



After

New church hall and vicarage – Chelsea Old Church, SW3

New Building Award

Architects: John Simpson & Partners

Judges' comments: *"the way in which the other accommodation partially wraps round the hall was particularly admired, and the frontage to Old Church Street harmonises with the street scene so much more than the previous buildings."*

Octavia House, Southern Row, Kensal W10

Award for general environmental improvement

Designed by R. Kerr-Bell with Hadley Design Associates

Judges' comments: *"the street has been made more welcoming, especially at night by the added lighting... a success story which will further revitalise this area."*

Golborne Road/Swinbrook Road W10

Mosaic created by the Wornington Green Adventure Centre and others – Commendation

Judges' comments: *"imaginative and eye-catching, and a significant enhancement visible to all."*

Peter Jones Department Store, Sloane Square, SW1

Special Award

Architects: John McAslan & Partners

Judges' comments: *"inspired by the lofty open space created within the store. The natural lighting, the views from the escalator*

and the masterful detailing throughout have made a wonderful building more wonderful."

Next year's Award Scheme

If you are involved in, or are aware of, a recent scheme which you consider to be of a quality which enhances the Borough, you are encouraged to nominate it for an award. Nomination forms can be obtained from the Planning Information Office at the Town Hall, Hornton Street W8 7NX, telephone: 020 7361 2079.

The Diana Memorial Fountain

For most years since 1997, I have conducted a one-off survey of “Dianistas” – people from around the world who choose the anniversary of the Princess of Wales’ tragically early death to leave flowers and messages on or near the southern gates of Kensington Palace. Usually they number around 100, and their commemoration is quiet and dignified. Beyond tidying-up the next day, no further maintenance seems to be needed.

On the north side of the palace, the extended playground named for the Princess has been a triumphant success. Most days it is packed with children and accompanying others: the Peter Pan motif has clearly delighted this generation of playground-goers. For the passer-by, there are lots of trees, bushes and grass to conceal what may be internal mayhem, and to deaden its noise.

Compare these two with the sad, sad story of the fountain in Hyde Park, which was opened by H.M. the Queen in July 2004. Veterans of the ‘Battle of Kensington Gardens’ will remember that the original strategy of General Gordon Brown and his civil service army was to commandeer the Round Pond and raise a memorial fountain in the middle, ensuring – it was successfully argued at the Town Hall protest meeting – the dispersal of the colonising swans, ducks, gulls and all the rest.

So the fountain idea was taken elsewhere, and finally opened for business on the grassy slopes above the Serpentine Lido. The shallow trough in attractive materials doesn’t look much like a fountain as most would define that term, but it does have concealed water systems which cause interesting variations and apparently impossible water flows. However, successive safety concerns have led both to high-security fencing and the expensive need for security staff – “paddle police” in *Evening Standard*-speak. I counted six on duty in high summer reducing, it would seem, to a minimum of three in colder months. The annual cost has been variously estimated at between £140,000 and £250,000.

Whatever you may think of Kathryn Gustafson’s design, its relevance to Diana, Princess of Wales or its appropriateness to location and climatic conditions, this level of security alone makes an absurdity of the whole “free-flowing” concept. How can you admire free-flowing water in a security cage? Hyde Park too is the loser, vulnerable as all parks are to fussy gardening – qv its south-east corner – and other human interventions, of which the cage is the most recent example. The irony may be that we must wait for the Dianista interest to fade markedly before security can be dismantled, letting the water flow in peace.

Anthony Land

Planning in 2004

Victories for the Kensington Society and various allies in the battles of the Victoria and Albert Museum Spiral and South Kensington station, as reported elsewhere in this review, have captured the headlines. But they are not the end of the story: strong arguments can be made for a new public entrance from Exhibition Road into the V & A, perhaps opening up the internal courtyard for direct access, and for visual and structural improvements to the 'bullnose' of the station. Let's hope their respective owners try again, with perhaps more modest schemes.

The catalyst may be the Dixon Jones scheme to improve Exhibition Road, provisionally budgeted at £25 million. A confidential presentation to amenity and residents' associations in early December 2004 of the initial ideas of these award-winning architects (the Royal Opera House, the National Portrait Gallery, and Somerset House are among their recent projects) promised well for the public launch in early 2005.

A separate firm of architects – this time an associate practice of Norman Foster's main firm – has been appointed for the rebuilding (almost certainly) of Holland Park School. Their initial task is to prepare plans for the whole of the present site, including residential development of the southern section, next door to the demolished John Atkins Building, itself formerly part of Queen Elizabeth College. In the absence of government grants, a profitable sale of this section of the site with full planning permission is essential for the financing of the school's rebuild.

Demolition threatened 1 Campden Hill, W8, the handsome residence for 50 years of the Uruguayan Ambassador. Pressure from the Kensington Society, backed by the Victorian Society, led to its listing by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. This should secure the building's future and may lead to the same protection for two neighbouring diplomatic properties.

But listing at grade 2* may not save the Commonwealth Institute. This landmark building, designed by Sir Robert Matthew in

the early 1960s, has been empty for more than two years since the Institute moved its operational base to Cambridge. Prospective purchasers have been put off by the recurring maintenance costs. The owners, a charitable trust with Commonwealth High Commissioners among the trustees, wish to demolish, clear and sell the site and raise funds for Commonwealth education projects.

Passions are running high. Lord Cunliffe, a practising architect who supervised the execution of Sir Robert's plans, now likens the building to a "worthy old carthorse that should be put down". A former Director-General of the Institute, Stephen Cox, says it is an "engineering, architectural and cultural icon". The Society forcibly backs retention.

Borough-wide, the dominant retail power of Tesco has led to fierce argument about the quality and appropriateness of the designs planned for new Tesco Metro and Tesco Express stores. Tesco added to local dismay at their proposals in Holland Park Avenue by opening the shop before planning permission had been granted. At the time of writing, pressure from the Society and two local amenity groups may lead to Tesco modifying the worst aspects of the scheme.

Alongside these high-profile cases, we have maintained our monthly monitoring of planning applications in Kensington. Borough-wide these amount to around 3,000 a year, of which the planning group (Amanda Frame, Robin Price and myself) takes a close look at perhaps 150. Common features of applications we note and usually object to include the installation of Velux windows and the use of PVC in place of wood for windows; additional floors and/or roof terraces on houses, and additional floors on blocks of flats. Proposals to extend houses below ground cause us particular concern because of the potential for long-term damage to foundations.

For the future, the Council has invited the Society to make early proposals for key issues to be included in their new (and statutory) Local Development Framework (LDF), taking the place of the Unitary Development Plan. The LDF takes effect in September 2007 and should carry forward many of the detailed policies in the current UDP, particularly, for example, in relation to Conservation Areas which cover 75 per cent of the borough. More problems are expected

with the need to reconcile LDF policies with controversial elements in the Mayor of London's Plan – those, for example, which deal with tall buildings, density of development and the requirement for additional housing in the Royal Borough, which remains the UK's most densely-populated area. Consultation about the contents of the LDF among the Kensington Society's membership is planned for the first half of 2005.

Anthony Land

The Kensingtons During the First World War

Ninety years ago, Kensington raised three infantry battalions that were sent to France to fight in the First World War. Their ranks were filled with local men who answered Lord Kitchener's call for volunteers. The only reminder of their existence is the memorial outside St Mary Abbots church. This is the story of those battalions and what happened to them up to Christmas 1914/15, when the war was supposed to be over.

Pre-war

Before the war, the local Territorial Army unit in Kensington was the 13th London Battalion. Based in the Borough since 1885 at their drill hall in Adam and Eve Mews, they became known as the



Joining up: the author's grandfather, Private Leonard Thorpe, joined the Kensingtons in 1915

'Kensingtons'. In 1910 Princess Louise, daughter of Queen Victoria and resident of Kensington Palace, became involved with the Battalion. She gave it permission to bear her name and it was often referred to as 'Princess Louise's Kensington Battalion'.

According to Field Marshall Sir John French, first commander of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF), territorials like the Kensingtons were despised by the regular army. They and the media ridiculed them as 'Saturday night soldiers'. Employers said in job advertisements that 'territorials need not apply', because men needed time off work to train.

This did not prevent a large number of men from joining up and attending the weekly evening training sessions, and the annual summer camp. Men were attracted by the drill hall sports facilities, the packed social calendar of dinners and smoking concerts, and often because their friends or relatives had joined.

Men received no wage, but had to pay a subscription. Each of the 28 battalions in the London Regiment, of which the 13th London Battalion was a part, levied different rates. The Kensingtons' rate was high, and probably as a result, was regarded as 'amongst the foremost London clubs'.

Officers and men were considered socially élite compared to other territorial battalions based in less well-off areas of London. Officers were professional men in law, medicine or business. The 'other ranks' had non-manual jobs such as office clerks or shop assistants at the large department stores of Selfridges, Whiteley's and Harrods. Amongst the officers were local celebrities such as 2nd Lieutenant Cedric Charles Dickens – grandson of the author – and Captain Parnell, who represented Britain in shooting at the 1912 Stockholm Olympics.

War

At the outbreak of war, men flooded drill halls and recruiting offices throughout Britain attempting to join up and fight. Many thought that the war would be 'over by Christmas.' The Kensingtons' Adam and Eve Mews drill hall became so overwhelmed that the Mayor of Kensington, Sir William Davison MP, opened another



The Kensingtons at the training camp, 1914

recruiting office in the town hall. This reduced the pressure somewhat, but the queue for this office still stretched several hundred metres, from the Town Hall well past St Mary Abbots Church!

By the end of September 1914 around 2,000 men had joined up in Kensington alone, the majority in the first week of war. These men were formed into new units. A second battalion of the 13th London was raised and designated as the 2/13; the pre-war battalion became the first battalion, or 1/13. The War Office then gave permission to Davison to recruit a further battalion raised under Kitchener's New Army scheme, and this was called the 22nd Royal Fusilier (Kensington) Battalion.

Many who joined up in the first weeks of war were of the same social class as the pre-war men. They included painter Eric Kennington, Norman Lawrie, son of the Managing Director of Whiteley's department store, and recruits from the Stock Exchange, the Times newspaper and Marylebone Cricket Club.

The recruitment process was not rigorous. John Tucker recounted how, on 14 November 1914, he turned up to join the Kensingtons two years under age and with a 'disability of the rib cage'. Tucker said that the Medical Officer (MO) turned up after an

'enjoyable lunch' and told him to hold out his arms and open and close his fingers. The MO then walked out of the room and let Tucker into the army. It was subsequently found that the 2/13 had over-recruited by 200 men, and the battalion had to jog round a field until 200 men dropped out and were discharged as unfit.

With huge numbers joining up, the War Office was faced with the challenge of equipping the expanding army. The issue of rifles to the three battalions of Kensington illustrates the situation. The 1/13, containing the most experienced men, were equipped with the old British army long Lee Enfield rifle, taken out of regular army service in 1902. The 2/13 had obsolete Japanese rifles which were, with bayonet fixed, 12 inches taller than most men, and the 22nd Royal Fusiliers had dummy wooden rifles.

France

On 4 November 1914, 29 officers and 835 other ranks of the 1/13 arrived in France to reinforce the BEF which had suffered 90 per cent casualties since being dispatched to reinforce the French in early August. The other two battalions remained in London, training and equipping in and around Kensington.

Two weeks later the 1/13 were in the trenches. An officer said that the men 'felt exhilarated' at going into the line for the first time, but this 'soon modified when the actual trenches were seen'. They were little more than ditches, six feet deep and four feet wide, filled with 12 inches of muddy slime. Sergeant Andrews wrote home that trench life was 'less than ideal', and Private Squire told his parents that 'we stand in mud, sleep in mud, eat mud, [and] wear mud'.

The Battalion occupied the same stretch of trench until March 1915. Men spent three days in the line and three at rest. Private Johnson said the landscape was 'uninterestingly flat as a pancake' with the fields divided by wide ditches and rows of willow trees. The Germans were only 80 yards away and their front line was described as looking 'like heaps of rusty rubbish on a dust heap in some abandoned slum'.

The winter of 1914/15 was one of the severest on record, with high rainfall and plunging temperatures, and this caused more

casualties than enemy action. Up until Christmas 1914 the 1/13 lost 16 killed and 28 wounded due to sniping and occasional artillery fire, compared to around 300 men classified as sick and not fit for duty due to colds, trench foot and frostbite.

The Christmas Truce

The arrival of Christmas made many of the men very homesick. Christmas Eve passed like many other days with 'occasional sniping' and two men wounded. At 7pm a sentry looking across to the German lines reported them 'all alright'. The Germans called over to British lines and wished them a happy Christmas and asked them 'where are your Christmas trees?'

This was the start of the famous Christmas truce. Of the 70 British infantry battalions in the front line for all or part of Christmas Day, eight agreed truces and 32 arranged truces and fraternised with the Germans.

In response to German entreaties, the Kensingtons returned the festive greetings but felt 'a little embarrassed by this sudden comradeship'. Fearing it was a German trick, the Kensingtons were ordered to 'stand to' to defend their trench against an expected attack, but none came. Instead, the Germans spent the rest of Christmas Eve 'singing away as hard as they could go'.

The truce on Christmas Day was initiated by the Germans, who shouted that they would not fire if the Kensingtons did not. The Kensingtons' war diary, kept by the battalion commander as a record of daily events, complained that it was impossible to fight because British units to the left and right of them had left their trenches. Only then did the Kensingtons participate in the truce.

Squire said he spent 'all Christmas Day... walking around in front of our trenches', meeting the Germans 'halfway and... exchange[ing] souvenirs'. It was an opportunity for many to 'stretch up' and 'swop... fags with the Jerries and sampl[e]... their schnapps'. Private Geoff Gilbert said that 'soon there were dozens of us fraternising, even to the extent of kicking a made-up football around in no-man's land'.

A great many Germans spoke English and had worked in hotels

in the West End of London. Both sides spoke of the appalling weather and agreed to end the truce at midnight by letting off a simultaneous rifle volley, firing high to avoid casualties.

Towards the end of the day one private said 'officers began to be apprehensive of too much conversation', fearing they may give valuable tactical information away, and ordered the men back to their trenches. One account recalled that 'in the most cordial manner, farewells were taken and the enemy and ourselves returned like rabbits to our respective burrows.'

The whole day had been an 'extraordinary experience'. The official history of the Kensingtons described it as 'a revelation of the friendship of enemies'. The truce lasted until 28 December when the war resumed as normal, when two Kensingtons were killed and two wounded.

Back home, the other two battalions carried on their training and would not go to France until 1916. Popular enthusiasm was still strong for the war. Kensington residents sent the men at the front parcels and gifts, and concerts were held to raise money for them. The public spirit of the time was reflected in an editorial in the Kensington News, which said of the 1/13, that in 'enduring the excruciating rigours of... trench warfare, [the word] "Kensington" may well replace "Spartan" in our vocabulary as the superlative of heroic endurance and valour... Kensington has sent out in the 13th a Battalion of Mark Tapleys... let the slacker take note.'

Tom Thorpe

Tom Thorpe is writing a history of the Kensingtons; his grandfather served with the 1/13 from 1915 to 1918. He would be delighted to hear from anyone who also had relatives in the battalion or has old letters, documents or photographs from the First World War. He will try and answer any queries people may have. He can be contacted at: tom.thorpe1@virgin.net or on: 07779 269 182.

News from the Kensington and Chelsea Partnership

The Partnership steering group, on which Celia Rees-Jenkins represents the Kensington Society, is reviewing the Borough's first Community Strategy, published in 2002. This strategy, based on widespread consultation and intended to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area, was accompanied by the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, which identified priorities for action. The steering group has taken these priorities into account in the allocation during the past two years of Neighbourhood Renewal Funds to support projects in St. Charles and Golborne wards; two of the poorest areas nationally.



*Before and After: The Portobello Road Railway Bridge
(Photographs from the Westway project)*

Projects in the environment and transport category are now being completed. Notably, work has finished on the bridge over the site of Portobello market, and this has been widely welcomed. The Westway Project, a community-led environmental design and public art group, deserves congratulations for its role in achieving these improvements, which form a valuable model for the proposed refurbishment of the bridge by Ladbroke Grove station. The bridges at Golborne Road and the north end of Ladbroke Grove need solutions which can deal with the restoration of Victorian structures over a busy railway line and with the current rash of flyposting. There are

conflicting views about the latter – either to try to prevent it, or to make provision for it at appropriate places. The first step is to complete a feasibility study for the Golborne Road bridge, and then in the light of the outcome, to find out what the community would like.

The Westway Project has also been instrumental in the creation of mosaics on the Swinbrook Estate, using designs by the Eritrean Parents and Children's Group and help from pupils of Colville Primary School. Lighting has been installed to help brighten a previously unwelcoming walkway. Attention is now being given to improving the footbridge between Tavistock Crescent and Acklam Road. Introducing



*Before and After: The Swinbrook Estate
(Photographs from the Westway project)*

lights and painting or decorating surfaces with the help of local people, particularly children, improves the environment, gives people a stake in their neighbourhood, and can reduce vandalism and crime. As a separate initiative to try to deal with the present problem of graffiti, the Council has made a short film to be shown in all local schools.

A garden at a women's refuge and an organic garden in Kenley Walk are finished, and work to improve the canal towpath is underway. Walking around the north of the Borough with the newly-appointed North Kensington Environmental Manager, it is noticeable that relatively small-scale projects can have a wide effect on their surroundings. For example, removing rubbish from frontages, securing sites awaiting development, painting forbidding galvanised railings and creating gardens on neglected land can greatly improve the character of an area. While it can take time and persistence to effect changes where property is not in Council ownership, it is worth

trying; and in some instances, particularly gardening, community groups are ready to take part. Their views will be taken into account in the new Community Strategy, to be published later in 2005, and efforts are being made to encourage residents in all parts of the Borough to provide information on their needs and priorities for improving the quality of life in Kensington and Chelsea.

Celia Rees-Jenkins

Annual General Meeting 2004

The well-attended 51st Annual General Meeting of the Kensington Society was held at the Maria Assumpta Centre, Kensington Square on 31 March 2004. It was opened by the President, Sir Ronald Arculus, with words of welcome to audience and guests, and in particular to Sir Malcolm Rifkind and to the guest speaker, Michael Winner.

Michael Winner, film maker, restaurant critic, script writer, journalist, local resident and latterly Chairman of the Police Memorial Trust, was introduced with the intriguing information that his *Who's Who* entry lists his recreations as 'making table mats' and 'washing silk shirts'. A long-term resident of Kensington, and a leading member of the Council, Mr Winner spoke on 'Kensington Yesterday and Today'. He began his talk by paying tribute to Gay Christiansen, and went on to recount his early memories of the area.

Mr. Winner came to Kensington in 1947. His father bought a bombed-out house on Melbury Road, which had been built by a Victorian architect named Sir Norman Shaw, for the artist Sir S. Luke Fildes (1844-1927). In that era, many artists lived in Melbury Road. 'It was a kind of Beverly Hills, very glamorous – and every single house was architecturally important, built of new materials and to interesting designs. But after the war, everyone wanted a new world, which meant getting rid of everything old, even if it was of value – and especially anything Victorian. Many houses in Melbury Road were torn down, and replaced with rubbish – blocks of flats and ugly buildings. Gay (Christiansen) and I fought to keep some of them.

'Kensington was a completely different place in 1947. The Holland Park area wasn't at all grand, it was full of bed sitters and small shops. There were no yellow lines on the roads, no parking meters – you could park anywhere, it was wonderful! As a child I used to climb into Holland Park, which was closed at the time, and play there. It was like an overgrown fairy land. The wartime bombing of



*The Mayor and
Sir David Ramsbotham*



*Ethne Rudd and
Willoughby Wynn*



*Harry Morgan and
Barnabas Brunner
both members of the Council*

the Jacobean mansion in the park was not severe, it could have been rebuilt, but of course it was not.'

When Mr. Winner's parents moved to France, he stayed and restored the family house on Melbury Road, retaining as many of its original features as possible. He has now bequeathed the house to the Borough to be preserved as a museum, in order to maintain its period details and domestic interiors for the interest of future generations.

Mr Winner went on to tell the audience some anecdotes of his film-making days. On a more serious note, he ended by talking about the Police Memorial Trust. 'The police are a very under-appreciated resource in this country', he said. 'I was very moved by the death of Yvonne Fletcher, and I wrote a letter at the time to the *Times*, saying that we really should put up memorials to the police in cases like this. People started sending me money, and eventually I decided to find out what it would take to set up a charity.' After a long struggle, the Police Memorial Trust was founded in 1984. It has to date erected 35 memorials to heroic policemen and women, and their latest project is a National Police Memorial in the Mall.

Following Mr Winner, the Society's Chairman, Robin Price, made his report for 2003/4.

'This has been a hugely busy and demanding year. Since the New Year we have moved into 'fast forward' mode on South Kensington station, the V&A Spiral and the Vicarage Gate Care Home. [All are reported on in the Chairman's Report in this publication]. We have also concerned ourselves with the Coronet Cinema, mobile telephone masts, the extended Congestion Charge zone, the Council's tree strategy, the Draft Cabinet Business Plan for the next five years, the Mayor's plans for London, and with much else.'

Mr Price gave an update on the Kensington and Chelsea Partnership, which is reported on in this publication, and then turned to Committee matters. 'I have been asked the purpose of the Council of the Kensington Society, whose members you see regularly printed in the Annual Report. This non-executive council was instituted by Mrs Christiansen, and forms part of our Constitution, to provide heavyweight names in case of planning crises. That is still the function of the Council, and be aware in these contentious times, that

members of the Council may be called upon to deliver their *avoids*.

'Robert Milne-Tyte has resigned from the Committee in order to devote himself to research and writing. That resignation was accepted with the utmost regret, the more so because his efficiency, expertise and imagination have been outstanding. He has served as Minutes Secretary for some ten years, and as Editor of the Annual Report for five. I am sure you will all want me to convey our great sense of gratitude to him for all he has done for the Society. We are fortunate indeed that Loveday Waymouth has agreed to take on the role of Minutes Secretary and that Caroline Shaw has taken on the role of Editor of the Annual Report.

'We also lose our treasurer, David Meggitt, who has been with us for some ten years, and has been a consistently reliable member of our team. We are extremely grateful to him and we are sad to lose him.'

Mr Price was followed by the Chairman of the Society's Planning Committee, Anthony Land. He reported on a number of issues, including the Coronet Cinema in Notting Hill Gate, whose likely purchaser is the Elim Pentecostal Church. The Council is seeking added protection of the building through a listing upgrade to 2*. The Society has told the developers of the electricity sub-station between the north-west corner of Brompton Cemetery and West Brompton Station that their scheme is 'intrusive and excessive'. The Joseph Yates timber merchants on Kensington Church Street wish to retain and refurbish the existing façade, while the interior is likely to be developed for residential purposes. The extension of the Congestion Charge to the Royal Borough is being opposed by the Society as inappropriate in a largely residential area, bad for business and contrary to the advice of the Greater London Authority's Transport Committee.

Caroline Shaw

The Kensington Society Prize 2004

The Kensington Society offers a Competition Prize in memory of Mrs Gay Christiansen, to year 10 pupils attending any secondary school, state or independent, situated within the former Royal Borough of Kensington who, in the view of the judges, produces the most interesting and best-presented entry.

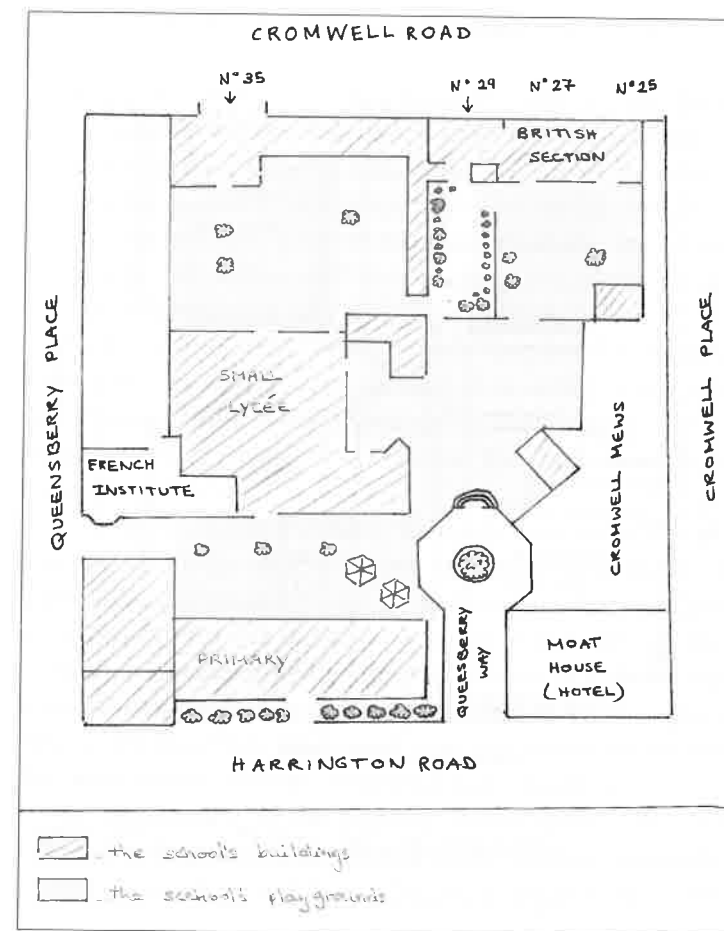
The competition for 2004 was for an essay of 800-1200 words:

Describe your school's immediate surroundings and the history of the area. Consider whether your school building has a positive or negative effect on its surroundings in terms of its appearance and the impact its use has on the environment.

If the building had to be demolished, state what you think should be the requirements for its replacement on the same site, taking into account any planning or other constraints which may apply, (and, if you feel appropriate, the views of local residents).

The winner of the prize for 2004 was a year 10 pupil from the Lycée Français Charles de Gaulle, Charlotte Poppy Pearce. She submitted an excellent report, accompanied by illustrations including old photographs, views of the current site, a plan of the school and a plan of a proposed replacement. Part of the essay is reprinted below:

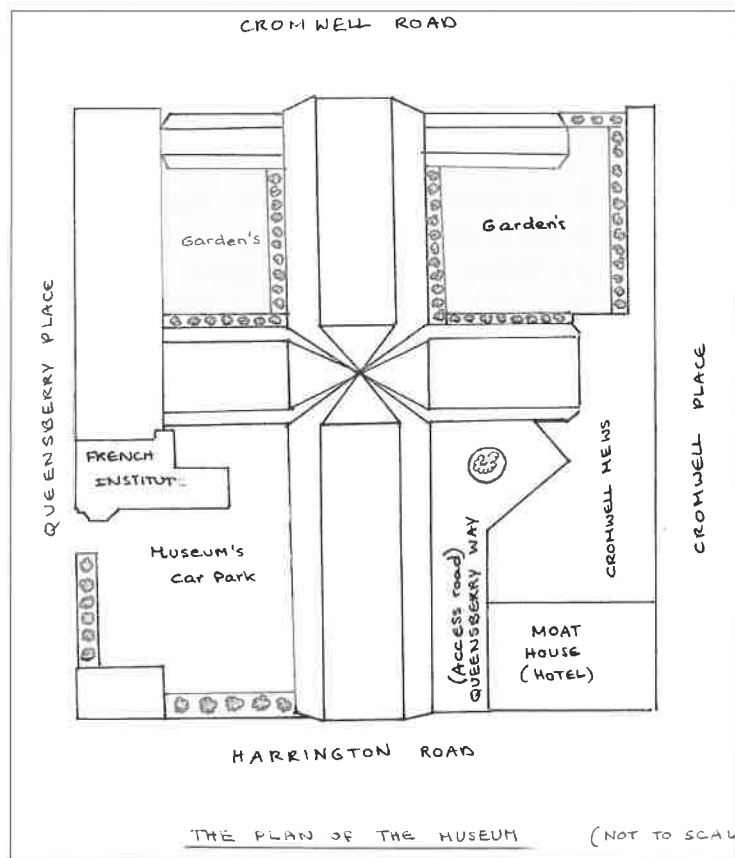
The Lycée was founded by Marie Bohn in 1915, and was first sited at Buckingham Palace Road. The headmistress of the school was Thérèse Oakshot, who continued to be headmistress until the early 1950s. The idea behind opening a French school was to provide an education to young French and Belgian refugees during the First World War. At the end of the war the Lycée moved to Cromwell Gardens, opposite the Victoria and Albert Museum. By 1932 there were 360 pupils of various nationalities, all being taught in French. By 1937, the 'small Lycée' was completed, and this is known as the 'original Lycée'. The school then expanded over the next 70 years to



A plan of the school

incorporate the four main buildings on its present site. The front of the primary school building (built in the 1980s) extends along Harrington Road. There is a huge similarity between the oppressive bulk of the red brick of the primary school on one side of the road and the bleak stone-coloured exterior of the block of flats.

Facing the rear of the small Lycée is the five storey building at No. 35 Cromwell Road, known by the students as the science



A plan of the proposed Museum of Culture

building. This was built in the 1950s, and opened by the French Ambassador in 1958. This is a most ugly building. It resembles a huge rectangular grey office block. It has a flat glass and concrete façade which is totally out of keeping with the elegant Victorian terraced houses on either side and the beautiful façade of the Natural History Museum opposite.

The school is divided into four main buildings, and in all approximately 3,000 pupils and staff are on the site every day. There are over 30 suites of toilets, which put strain on the old sewage

system. Enormous amounts of water are consumed by the toilets and the kitchens.

The whole school is cleaned every evening. A huge amount of rubbish is generated from the classrooms and the kitchens and is deposited in a large refuse bin situated in the rear of the playground area. Recycling does not take place anywhere on the site. However, the Lycée does generate a lot of employment in the area. There are approximately 346 office staff and teachers, 49 catering staff plus cleaners and maintenance staff and outside contractors.

The Lycée is situated in the heart of London. The surrounding buildings and area attract many tourists. It is within a few minutes' walking distance from South Kensington Tube station and is well serviced with buses and taxis to Chelsea, Knightsbridge, the King's Road and Piccadilly.

If all the buildings that form the Lycée were to be demolished, there would be a large area of ground stretching from the Cromwell Road through to Harrington Road and Queensbury Place to Cromwell Place. Although there are already a number of museums in the area, there are none representing the different cultures in London and how they came about. I would like to see a Museum of Culture. The actual building would have two main areas, one part would be the museum and the other would combine commerce and education.

The architecture of the building would reflect the Victorian style of the surrounding area, though using modern materials. The front of the museum would have a Victorian greenhouse façade, but instead of using clear glass, I would use mirror-effect glass, which would reflect the Natural History Museum building opposite. This glass building would extend all the way to Harrington Road forming a central aisle with two side aisles in the shape of a cross. The museum itself would extend from the Cromwell Road to the middle of the cross. On either side of the museum would be public gardens. The rest of the building would be divided into a shopping area, restaurants and educational area, each sponsored by a particular country promoting their goods, culture and food. The museum building would show exhibits, and the history of the various peoples and the contribution they have made to their new home.

Commonhold Tenure

The recent introduction of commonhold tenure for blocks of flats and mixed-use developments has been hailed by the Government as the greatest reform of property law for 80 years. However, those of us who were closely involved in the parliamentary campaign over the Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act know that commonhold ownership will remain a rarity for many years to come. Few residents of the Royal Borough will be unaware of the problems that can arise from leasehold home ownership, ranging from unjustified service charge demands, to ever-shortening leases. This borough has the largest concentration of homes on leasehold ownership anywhere in the country.

More generally, the leasehold system is expanding throughout England and Wales (Scotland does not have the leasehold system) more rapidly than at any time in the past, with around 40 per cent of new homes currently consisting of flats. The development of a fairer system of flat ownership to replace the discredited leasehold system would command widespread support from home owners. Commonhold ownership, which is comparable to condominium ownership in the United States and cooperative ownership elsewhere in Europe, offers that very possibility. Under commonhold tenure, flats are owned in perpetuity like a freehold, rather than time-limited under a lease, while the ownership of the flat and a share in the common parts of the building are indivisible, leaving no room for a landlord to own the freehold.

Unfortunately, commonhold tenure will never take over from the leasehold system in the restricted form that it has been introduced by the Government. Very few transfers of existing leasehold blocks will take place, because such a transfer will require each and every party with an interest in the block to consent. This includes not just the leaseholders, but the landlord and all the mortgage lenders as well. In the case of new builds, developers will still prefer to sell flats on a leasehold basis, since this will be more profitable for them. By retaining the freehold interest, a block of flats will become

progressively more valuable to the developer as the leases get shorter. In its own regulatory impact assessment, the Government has forecast that only a quarter of new flat developments will be commonhold. Even that is likely to prove optimistic. A further difficulty is that the Government has decided to use complex company law as the basis for the new commonhold associations, rather than utilise one of the simpler forms of governance used in other countries. One particular model to be commended is the strata title system used in Australia. The notion of adopting best practice from other countries seems strangely anathema to the architects of commonhold law.

Nigel Wilkins
Chair - Campaign for the Abolition
of Residential Leasehold (CARL)
www.carl.org.uk

128 Kensington Church Street Street: Like No Other Home

Should you have the strange fortune of living at 128 Kensington Church Street, there really is no place like home. Sometimes I return to the house early in the morning after a pre-dawn arrival at Heathrow from several weeks away in the exotic East or the jungly South. I let myself into the sleeping house, put down my baggage, and touch the walls of the hall.

These walls are papered with a vine design which rambles all over the common parts of the house – stairs and landings and passages and spurs. I am making a little obeisance to the mood and style, and the *lares* and *penates*, of this blessed plot. Then I pass into the drawing room and the back parlour and the dining room, and – if dawn has broken – into the garden, honouring the spirits of those who have lived here or known it well. This same house and garden, about whose past we know so much intimate detail, has changed so little – to our certain knowledge – since the days of Muzio Clementi, the multi-gifted Horsleys and Isambard Brunel, their great friend Felix Mendelssohn, and the glittering parade of musical figures who visited from the 1830s to the 1850s: Bellini, Chopin, Paganini, the pianist-composer Ignaz Moscheles, and violinist-composer Joseph Joachim. Nor did the flow of the muse-blessed at 128 stop there.



No. 128 Kensington Church Street,
drawing by Frank L. Emanuel, 1944.

There's a uniqueness too, to the building and its configuration. Sealed off from the rumble of Kensington Church Street by double or triple glazing at the lower levels, on its street-side, western face, its 18th century porch and doorway let you into a rambling family home on four rather erratic levels above ground and one below it: some 30 rooms in all, and two gardens. The original, ground-level garden runs through to Brunswick Gardens and is skirted along the south edge by a pretty brick passage, which leads the visitor from the Brunswick Gardens door by a dedicated stairway to the roof garden and upper floors. It was not always quite thus; but the core house and garden space have remained inviolate for nearly 300 years. All the residents down the years have stayed loyal to its origins, its plasterwork and fittings; not least we Staceys these past 35 years.

The house began in 1736 as No. 1 High Row, Kensington Gravel Pits, where it rose out of green fields to the north, west and south, and gravel diggings immediately to the east (leaving our garden to this day nine feet higher than the land beyond its retaining wall). Kensington's gravel built 18th century roads and, incidentally, provided Tsar Alexander's infilling for the marshland on which he was expanding St. Petersburg in the opening decades of the 19th century; out of which Mr Orme (he of the eponymous Square) made a tidy packet.

The row of six High Row houses faced Church Lane, which wound up from Kensington village and the then quite modest parish church which preceded today's St Mary Abbots. The Lane stopped at the turnpike running from Tyburn (Marble Arch) out to Oxford, just to the London side of Notting Hill's tollgate. Our No. 1 was the most southerly of the clutch of new homes on land sold by the Craven estate to a speculator who in turn sold the patch to a Bloomsbury builder, Richard Gittens. He built well, but went bust. There were no takers. The nearest piece of contiguous London was Kensington Square, and singularly few amenities, in the jargon of today, were in reach at the top end of Church Lane. A scatter of Queen Anne houses occupied the area of today's Kensington Mall.

Brave Mr Gittens sold all the houses for a knock-down £500 all-in to Dulwich College, which was intent on providing a place and income (from rents) for a master or mistress to teach poor local children. It was

from Dulwich, or its sister James Alleyn's Girls' School, that we were eventually to buy the freehold 250 years later.

No. 1 High Row was to add a few extra feet to the depth of its frontage in the 18th century. In the 19th century a spacious artist's studio was built with a large north-facing window, plus new rooms below it; then some servants' quarters were tacked on to the top of the house. We ourselves were allowed to add a double-storey gallery above the 19th-century extension to the south of the house, with a roof garden on top reachable from the property's eastern entrance, as I have described.

Muzio Clementi – composer, virtuoso pianist, conductor, master-teacher and piano-maker – lived here from 1817 to 1823. He provided the musical power-house of Prinny's London, having come to England as a 14-year-old prodigy, fostered by the grandee and future Lord Mayor of London, Peter Beckford. European fame was sealed for Clementi by a contest with Mozart on Christmas Eve 1781, staged in Vienna by the Emperor Josef II, at which the two most brilliant young virtuosi of Europe competed before invited royalty as performers and improvisers. Mozart was characteristically inventive and bumptious, and the Emperor declared it a tie. But while Mozart, four years Clementi's junior, was to die at 35 in 1791, Clementi was to survive until 1834, a venerated figure in retirement at Evesham. One of his descendants in London today is David Clementi, a former Deputy-Governor of the Bank of England.

Muzio brought musicians from all over to No. 1 High Row. He was a partner in a piano factory in Cheapside: we have one of his 1819 forte-pianos in the front hall. In 1823 he sold his lease of the house to an organist of high reputation, William Horsley, a shining light in the musical firmament and still known to every churchgoer today as composer of the tune to Mrs Alexander's *There is a Green Hill Far Away*. There was much more to Horsley's compositions, and all six of his and his wife's offspring had their gifts – musical, artistic, literary. Mother Elizabeth Horsley was the daughter of the composer John Wall Callcott who lived at Kensington Mall, and she was niece of the painter Augustus Callcott.

For the 20-year-old Mendelssohn on his first visit to London in 1827, No. 1 High Row was to become a home from home. At least three of the Horsley children were musicians. Felix Mendelssohn adored the

Horsley household and returned to London on quite prolonged visits in 1832 and 1833 and again in 1837, by which time he had married Cecile Jeanrenaud. In one of his letters (dated July 25, 1832) to his London friend Karl Klingemann of the Hanoverian Embassy, he drew a sketch of No. 1 High Row from the garden side, with impressive precision of memory. He frequently played music with the Horsley brood and participated in musical dramas in their first floor drawing room (now, somewhat truncated, the master bedroom), like the 'operatic tragedy' *The Magician*, composed by 13-year-old Sophie Horsley for five voices, with scenery painted by her brother John. It premiered in January 1833 and was performed anew for Mendelssohn in April.



Manuscript of the song
Mendelssohn wrote for Mary Horsley

Isambard Kingdom Brunel, justifiably one of the most celebrated engineers in the world, was another close friend of the family, and an ardent contributor to the family's theatricals. Later in 1833, Felix dashed off a song for Mary, eldest of the Horsley offspring, entitled *Blumen, blumen, warum Lacht ihr Nicht?*, which was surely sung around the piano, but never came to be gathered up in the young maestro's *oeuvre*. The manuscript was chanced upon in 1975 among the archives of Brunel, and a photostat was passed to us here at 128, where the self-same song was

performed, from the manuscript, at a concert by the soprano Rosemary Williams and pianist Richard Burnett, before an invited audience in the self-same house, after a space of 142 years.

Mary went on to marry Brunel in 1836, following his proposal to her one Sunday morning as they strolled back from church along the byway that would become Bedford Gardens. The original of her brother

John's portrait of Brunel hangs in the National Portrait Gallery, and a copy hangs here at 128. Mary's room on the second floor, garden side, was known by the family as the 'Sacred Ground' from her insistence that her rumbustious siblings keep out of it. As my wife Caroline's private dining room, we give it the same title today. John's wife Rosamund has left her signature engraved with a diamond on one of the window panes, and the date 1874.

John went on to become the archetypal Victorian story painter; no genius perhaps, but accomplished and popular and prolific. The Horsley oil we have hanging in the back parlour is an invariable talking point, with its implicit narrative of thwarted love. His practice of draping his nudes earned him the sobriquet 'Clothes Horsley'. While he painted away in his studio on the first and second levels, his son Victor ran a clinic as a brain surgeon in the room below – our dining room of today. Victorian brain surgery was pioneering stuff, and Victor was knighted for his skills, dying in Mesopotamia in 1915.

The house's occupancy in the early 20th century moved sideways in the family to Felix Warre, son of the Eton headmaster. Loyal as ever to its musical traditions, his family also put on plays in the garden. A further family link brought occupancy of the house to the economist and oboeist Wynne Godley and his wife Kitty Epstein (formerly the wife of Lucian Freud, who lives and paints a few doors away today). Kitty's father Jacob's bronze casts crowded the basement here when in 1969 we first moved in. Since then, my wife Caroline Stacey has pursued her sculptural career, continuing the creative output of 128 in the plastic arts, and I have written my books and sheltered the editorial activities of the Stacey International imprint; and together we have raised a bonny family whose gifts can perhaps hold a candle to the Horsleys'.

Tom Stacey

Tom Stacey's most recent book, Tribe, was a Times Literary Supplement 'Book of the Year' choice for 2003.



Mary Horsley

Licensing in 2004

In one of the more glaring ironies of the day, the Government is claiming on the one hand to be clamping down on the 'binge drinking' culture, whilst at the same time moving ahead with plans to introduce 24-hour licensing. Its Licensing Act, which will both liberalise our licensing laws and transfer responsibility for licensing decisions to local councils, will take full legal effect in the course of 2005. Since this final stage in the legislative process will probably take place after the General Election is over, let us hope that the issue is given a good airing in the election campaign itself. This legislation will, without doubt, have a seriously detrimental effect on the lives of residents in central London, and indeed potentially anyone else living near licensed premises.

Under the provisions of the legislation, local councils are required to publish a policy statement indicating their strategy for dealing with licensing applications within their jurisdiction. The statement published by the Royal Borough is broadly sympathetic to the interests of residents. One of the council's key aims is to endeavour to hold the line at a midnight closing time for licensing applications.

However, the council's resolve on this matter is likely to be severely tested by those licensees determined to take advantage of the new liberal regime. The entertainment industry is well resourced, and more than able to fund a major fight with the council if it chooses.

The views of those living in the immediate vicinity of premises seeking a licence will be crucial in opposing the trend towards extended opening hours. Greater efforts will therefore be needed to ensure that residents affected by late night licences are kept better informed than at present. For example, there is always a risk of controversial applications slipping through the net after being introduced at the height of the holiday season, when many residents are away.

We would like to see an assessment of the impact of the Licensing Act undertaken at any early stage, particularly since there are already serious concerns that the Government has gone too far to appease the interests of the entertainment industry at the expense of the living environment of local residents.

Nigel Wilkins
Member of Executive Committee

South Kensington Station: a History

Thanks to a vigorous local campaign, strongly supported by the Kensington Society and the Brompton Association, South Kensington Underground Station was awarded a Grade 2 listing in the summer of 2004, as a building of special architectural and historic interest.*

The Emergence of the Underground

London's underground rail network opened with a great fanfare on 10 January 1863. Britain was the first country, and London the first city, to have conceived and developed an underground passenger railway, and it heralded a revolution in transportation throughout the world. *The Times* declared it 'the great engineering triumph of the day', and on the morning it opened, as many as 30,000 passengers crammed into the 45 teak coaches of the train, all wanting to be part of this first, historic journey.

In the following weeks and months, huge numbers of people continued to use the trains, and it became clear that there was money to be made from the underground. Many promoters came forward, depositing bills before Parliament for their own specific schemes. Just one new proposal was approved however, for two new tracks to be built and operated by the Metropolitan Railway Company. One was to run from Moorgate to Tower Hill in the east, and the other was to run from Paddington via Notting Hill Gate and Kensington High Street, to South Kensington in the west.

Why South Kensington?

South Kensington's importance was partly due to its geographical position. The planners were working on a long-term scheme to develop an inner circle of underground railway tracks which would link all the principal railway termini in London. This would eventually result in the Circle Line. From the outset, South Kensington was an important point in this circuit, forming a vital link

between Paddington and Tower Hill.

Another factor was South Kensington's newly-fashionable status as the site of 'Museumland' or 'Albertopolis'. This was the great scheme of exhibition space, museums and colleges financed mainly by the £186,000 profit from the Great Exhibition of 1851. Prince Albert wanted to use this money to create a cultural and educational quarter in London, where the arts and sciences could flourish.

Prince Albert and the Commissioners proposed the development of an area of 86 acres, stretching south from Kensington Gore towards Thurloe Square and east of Brompton, which at the time was a semi-rural, sparsely populated stretch of land. By 1856, the Commissioners had laid out the Cromwell Road, Exhibition Road and Queen's Gate, and christened the new area 'South Kensington'. By the time the first underground railway opened seven years later, South Kensington had become a popular place to live. It was also attracting thousands of visitors every month, who came to the horticultural garden, the new 1862 exhibition centre and the 'South Kensington Museum', later the Victoria and Albert Museum.

At first, there was no public transport for South Kensington. It was clear however, that if the Commissioners wanted visitor numbers to increase and land prices to rise, the opening of an underground station would be a tremendous boost to the area.

South Kensington Underground Station is Built

In July 1864 a new company was incorporated as the Metropolitan District Railway Company (or the District Line Company). The company had powers to build a new underground rail line from South Kensington to Tower Hill, plus two spurs, one from South Kensington through Gloucester Road and Earl's Court to West Brompton, and the other from Kensington High Street to what is now Olympia.



The Metropolitan Railway Company completed its section of line from Paddington via Bayswater, Notting Hill and Kensington High Street to South Kensington, in October 1868. They built stations with iron and glass roofs, pierced with outlets in order to disperse the fumes from the steam trains. At South Kensington, the station was constructed on the site of what, ten years earlier, had been Harrison and Bristow's plant nursery.

The District Line

Once the District Line Company had been granted permission to lay tracks at South Kensington, they set about purchasing land at the end of Exhibition Road and Harrington Road from the Commissioners. Work began on the District Line section of the Circle Line in June 1865. For a year, 2,000 workmen, 200 horses and 58 engines dug their way underground. South Kensington's tracks were built by the 'cut and cover' method used in all the earliest underground railways. This involved cutting a deep trench into the ground, and laying the tracks. Construction at South Kensington was hampered by the many water springs that the builders found below ground. Pumps had to be operated day and night to keep the area dry enough for construction. About 4,000 gallons of water were taken up every minute, and at one stage it was thought that a permanent pumping station would have to be established for the station.

The South Kensington-Westminster section of the District Line was ready by Christmas Eve 1868. At first it used the station, rolling stock and locomotives of the Metropolitan Railway Company. The District and Metropolitan lines were run by different executives, with different rules, which caused great confusion. The District Line permitted smoking, for example, while the Metropolitan Line did not, so a passenger found himself having to extinguish, then re-light his cigarette according to the station he was travelling through. In 1870, the District Line directors announced that they would be operating their own services. At South Kensington, the District Line facilities, including a separate ticket office, were completed in 1870. The station became arranged around two island and two single platforms.

The District Line chairman, James Staats Forbes, was an

energetic and charming Aberdonian who could persuade anyone of anything by 'the delicacy of his touch, his light banter and personal charm'. The chairman of the Metropolitan Railway Company was Sir Edward Watkin, who had for many years, been Forbes' sworn enemy. Watkin was a tough bully of a man, and one of the most highly effective railway giants of the 19th century. The battle of wills between the two men was played out most dramatically at South Kensington station, where one line began and the other ended.

The Circle Line at South Kensington

In 1877 Forbes and Watkin were forced to forge a temporary truce, when the Metropolitan and the District Line companies jointly approached the Metropolitan Board of Works for financial support to build the rest of the tracks that would form the Circle Line. The District Line tracks would extend east from South Kensington to Tower Hill, where they



South Kensington Station, 1930s
© The London Transport Museum

would join Metropolitan line tracks to form a complete circle. The companies were awarded £800,000, and work began in September 1881. Three years later, in 1884, the Circle Line was complete. At the opening ceremony, which was held at South Kensington station, Forbes and Watkin were forced for the first and last time to sit together side by side, in front of gathered press on a brand new Circle Line train.

The Circle Line was not an immediate success. Trains regularly ran up to three hours late: one group of passengers who were trapped for hours in a stationary train staged a breakout, smashing windows and climbing out of carriages. Forbes and Watkin continued to argue publicly. The staff of the District and Metropolitan Companies

enacted their chairmen's animosity on the ground, with often farcical consequences. Passengers arriving at South Kensington station were faced with separate booking offices, and Metropolitan staff were under instruction to make it more difficult for passengers to use District Line trains. Ticket sellers often sent passengers the long way round the Circle Line in order to ensure that they did not use their rival's section of the track.

In May 1885, the District Line Company built a 484-yard subway in order to provide a covered route to take passengers from South Kensington station to the grounds of the new Inventions Exhibition, which had just opened. Passengers using the tunnel were charged 1d for a single journey, or 1½d return. The subway closed after the Colonial and Indian Exhibition ended on 10 November 1886, but reopened again permanently in December 1908, when it became free of charge.

The Electric Revolution

The first years of the new century marked the beginning of a new era for South Kensington station. In 1901, a dynamic Quaker financier from Philadelphia named Charles Tyson Yerkes, formed the Underground Electric Railways Company of London Ltd (UERL), more commonly called The Underground Group. It would become the dominant force in London's transport system for much of the 20th century. Yerkes' first action was to buy a majority stakehold in South Kensington and the rest of the District Line Company. It was the initial step in a grand plan to bring American-style electrification to the whole of London's underground system. In 1902, Yerkes built a power station at Lots Road, with easy access to the coal barges. In the following years, he bought up three more railway companies which would become the Piccadilly Line, the Bakerloo Line and the Northern Line. With great energy and vision, Yerkes set about creating a single, unified London Underground.

Electric motors were installed in Circle Line trains in July 1905, and in January 1907, South Kensington became part of Yerkes' new Piccadilly Line, which ran from Hammersmith to Finsbury Park. Rather than the 'cut and cover' method, the Piccadilly Line was a

deep-level electric tube network buried beneath the ground.

The electrification of the trains and the end of the steam era inspired the controllers of the District Line to refurbish their old station buildings. As a key station on the circuit, South Kensington was one of the earliest to receive a facelift. The pale, restrained brickwork of the 1868 Metropolitan station was almost completely demolished in 1903, and rebuilt by the architect George Sherrin (who also built the dome of the London Oratory) in the Edwardian classical style. Two new street-level entrances, one to the north on Thurloe Street, the other to the south on Pelham Street, were constructed, with six panels of ornate black and white Arts-and-Crafts-style wrought iron lettering.

At the same time, the District Line company moved its booking office downstairs. Increasing property prices in South Kensington meant that there was money to be made by hiring out the ground floor station area to retailers. The ticket office in the rounded western end of the station was replaced with a shopping arcade, also designed by George Sherrin in 1903. This was one of the first station shopping arcades in the world.



The shop sites became home to a variety of small local businesses; a jeweller's, a milliner's, a florist's and various art, book and antique shops. In 1910, the Anglo-Persian Carpet Co. moved into No. 6 the Arcade. It was the first of the many Oriental carpet galleries to open during the Edwardian era, and supplied the nearby Victoria and Albert Museum with hundreds of rugs, saddlebags and other items for their collection. Sadly this shop has recently closed down, after over 90 years of continuous trading.

The arcade also occupies a place in the history of literature. George Bernard Shaw's heroine Eliza Doolittle and her young husband Frederick opened a flower shop in what Shaw described in *Pygmalion* (1913) as 'an arcade not very far from the Victoria and Albert Museum.'

The Piccadilly Line and the Architecture of Leslie Green

Yerkes not only wanted all trains to be run on electric power; he also wanted every station on his network to be built in the same style. His in-house architect, Leslie Green, was charged with creating a new model of station architecture that could be applied to all stations within the group, from Maida Vale to South Kensington, giving all the disparate lines an instantly recognisable image. Green rose to the challenge, designing more than 40 stations in three years before dying of exhaustion in 1908, at the age of 33. Each of Green's station façades were designed to project a confident yet reliable image, with dark red glazed terracotta tiles and mouldings, Arts and Crafts-style ironwork, friezes and grilles, and arches carried up around the windows of the mezzanine floor.

Like all Green's stations, South Kensington's Piccadilly line façades on Pelham Street, abutting the District Line entrance of the station in the south, and Thurloe Street to the north, were faced with oxblood terracotta faience tiles. These tiles reflected colour and light onto the streets and produced an assured, somewhat flamboyant effect. More practically, they were extremely easy to keep clean.

Green's booking office for the Piccadilly Line section of South Kensington station was lined with bottle green faience tiles moulded with an Art Nouveau pomegranate design. The booking windows were styled as miniature aedicules, made of moulded faience blocks. Next to the booking hall were teak-panelled lifts with wrought-iron grilles, which carried passengers down to the Piccadilly line platforms.

At around the same time, the company adopted its own instantly-recognisable symbol, Harry Ford's 'bulls eye' roundel of a solid red circle crossed by a blue bar, which was introduced in 1909, and is still used today. The London Underground Group was one of the first companies in Britain to utilise design so coherently in order

to fix itself in the minds of its customer.

During the First World War, the pedestrian subway beneath South Kensington station was used to store art treasures from the Imperial Institute, which was occupied by civil servants working on food rationing. During the Second World War, the station became a makeshift underground hospital. Today, as the gateway to 'Museumland', South Kensington station is one of the most frequently-used of all the Underground Group's stations.

Caroline Shaw

Congestion Charging

The Congestion Charge was a radical proposal for tackling the traffic problems of Central London. It has confounded most of its critics by its success in reducing the levels of traffic and congestion, and has made Central London a more attractive place to be. It may have deterred some of the few shoppers who went by car to Oxford Street – although fewer than four per cent of shoppers arrived by car before the Charge – and may have affected the lunch-time restaurant trade. But many car commuters have found it beneficial, and people have found bus travel easier and more reliable, with many more buses on the road. Overall it has been a great success and has quite widespread support – people appreciate the need for it.

Having had such a success, it was not surprising that the Mayor of London proposed to introduce congestion charging elsewhere in London. Based on an analysis of congestion in inner London, he now proposes to extend the Central Area Congestion Charging zone to cover most of the rest of Westminster and most of Kensington and Chelsea. He proposed the extension before the May 2004 Mayoral Elections and now, despite widespread objections, he may still proceed with the scheme.

The proposed extension has generated a lot of controversy. Some people simply object to paying to drive around the Borough (although current or potential car commuters who drive to or through the Central Area are not surprisingly silent) – but increasingly people accept that we need to pay. We accept that we need to pay for parking – especially when residents' parking is so cheap, even if it does not guarantee a space outside our home. But unlike parking control, the difficulty with the proposed extension to the Central Area Congestion Charging zone is that it is very hard to see any benefits, and there are lots of problems. With few apparent advantages and plenty of disadvantages, is it surprising that the proposal is unpopular?

The main benefit claimed for the scheme is a reduction in traffic and congestion. Most of the benefits from deterring traffic travelling to or through the Central Area have already been achieved

by the existing zone – this is particularly noticeable on Cromwell Road, but also on some of the other main east/west roads, such as Westway, Holland Park Avenue and Kensington High Street. So what more could be gained by shifting the boundary from Park Lane to the Earl's Court one-way system from Shepherd's Bush to the Thames, given that even paying an extra 50 pence a day would not deter residents from using their car? One pound per day for driving and parking in Kensington and Chelsea sounds like a bargain!

Some residents are not convinced that there is much congestion in the Borough – after all, some would argue that congestion is more than the minimum you are used to: it is purely relative. But there are roads in the Borough that do suffer from congestion, notably the Earl's Court one-way system. This has been chosen as the "boundary route" – the road that traffic seeking to avoid the enlarged Central Area Congestion Charge zone will be encouraged to take. If any additional traffic is diverted onto this route it could easily seize up and jam the main east/west routes as well. The net effect could be to redistribute congestion rather than to reduce it and, perhaps, to make it worse.

What are the disadvantages?

The cost – although at 50 pence a day, is not large – is an obvious disadvantage. But for some people who live to the west of the eastern leg of the Earl's Court one-way system, the cost could be £5 per day – a real deterrent to car use. The discriminatory effect of the proposal has been a major source of objection. The Mayor may yet propose to allow the large number of people affected to have the same rate as the rest of the Borough.

The ideal would be to change the boundary, to make the Thames, West London Line and the Grand Union Canal the outer boundary with the limited number of bridges as the entry points. The Mayor is currently worried that people may go into the zone by accident and not be able to turn around. Since most enter at Shepherd's Bush and the Cromwell Road, where they could turn around, he just needs to be a bit more radical if he wants this scheme.

Alternatives?

There are alternatives to extending the Central Area Congestion Charge zone. Doing nothing is always an option. A separate zone with a lower charge would achieve the same results but would cost more to administer. Charging more for the Central Area zone could further reduce traffic going to or through Central London. On 30 November 2004, the Mayor announced that he is considering raising the charge from £5 to £8. Finally, as a long-term option we could have a zonal charging system similar to the London Transport zones – that would require an electronic charging system.

The Next Steps

The Mayor is still considering extending the Central Area zone, with possible changes to charges to residents between the Earl's Court one-way system and the railway and to the boundaries. The Mayor will consult the public in spring, with a final decision in summer 2005 at the earliest, and implementation, if he decides to proceed, in summer 2006. There is a chance, however, that in the total scheme of things the western extension might fall into the category of "not worth the effort" – too much hassle, no real benefits and not much income – when the Mayor has much bigger transport schemes in his Transport Strategy for London.

Michael Bach

The Koestler Awards Scheme

During September and early October 2004, members may have noticed a banner beside the war memorial at the bottom of Kensington Church Street, advertising an exhibition mounted by the Koestler Awards Trust, in St Mary Abbots Church Hall. However, they may not have known much about the purpose of the trust or its annual exhibition.

The Koestler Awards Scheme was established in 1962 by Arthur Koestler, with the collaboration of the then Home Secretary, Rab Butler. Once himself a prisoner, and passionately interested in rehabilitation, Koestler felt that if prisoners, particularly uneducated prisoners, were to be successfully rehabilitated back into society, there was a need to develop ways of addressing barriers to learning – low self-esteem, destructive emotions and fear of failure. Himself a writer, he felt that one of the best ways of doing this was by stimulating creative activities, each one of which was a personal achievement. He therefore set up a Trust to encourage art, craft, music and creative writing by means of an annual competition, open to prisoners of all ages throughout the United Kingdom, including British prisoners in foreign jails. The scheme also covers people detained in high security psychiatric hospitals and young people in secure units run by the social services.

Every year the Trust mounts an exhibition of prize-winning and other entries, which, for the past three years, has been held in the hall of St Mary Abbots. The competition now encompasses an impressive number of categories, including art; sculpture; ceramics; craft; woodcraft; soft furnishings; soft toys; needlecraft; needlepoint; knitting and crochet; textile art; matchstick models; prose; magazines; specific writing; prose of a spiritually uplifting nature; food and cookery writing; poetry; playwriting for stage; playwriting for radio; writing for television; calligraphy and decorative calligraphy; recycling; papier maché; music composition and lyrics; music performance – performed; computer skills; furniture; engineering and engineering designs; technical drawing; dressmaking



Psykle III
Koestler Award
HMP Wakefield

experts in their own fields, give their services free of charge. What's more, in addition to judging, they add some critical advice, to help individual entrants develop their skills.

About one in four of those who enter the competition receive a cash prize, ranging from £20 to £60, with a small number of special awards of £100 for outstanding



Boy
Koestler New Entrant Award
HMP Wakefield

and tailoring; hairdressing; nail art; photography; performance of the spoken word; oral storytelling, combined arts – video and film-making.

In 2004 the 4,000 entries were either judged in the establishment from which the entry came – such as performance of the spoken word – or sent to the Koestler Arts Centre at HMP Wormwood Scrubs, where a team of judges spent two days studying entries and deciding on the Awards to be given. Competition judges, who are all acknowledged

entries. There are additional awards for young offenders, under-18s, under-25s, over-50s and new entrants. Entrants also receive the money for any item sold at the exhibition.

This year was very special because representatives of the Government Art Collection selected 79 entries to decorate the new Home Office building. Of these, only 23 were prize-winning.

In addition, the Trust runs a number



Decorative Lace Collar
Koestler Award 1st Prize
HMP Foston Hall

of Arts in Prison projects under a scheme called 'Learning to Learn through the Arts.' The aim is to inspire people who want to learn, and to address some of the difficulties they may have had with learning in the past. Motivating people to want to learn is one of the most important tasks that teachers of all subjects can perform in prison, if prisoners are to be helped along the road to successful rehabilitation. In many instances, the self-esteem generated by an artistic creation provides the vital trigger. This emphasises the importance of the arts in changing the attitude people have towards their own ability to learn.

Unfortunately the importance of this is still not fully recognised in many prisons, nor is the linkage between artistic practice and key and basic skills. In an attempt to rectify this, the Trust is designing courses in which the creative and the academic complement each other. It is hoped that, once reality has struck, teaching of the arts will become embedded into the regime of every prison, and that learning will become accessible to a broader range of the prison population.

Arthur Koestler's torch was passed, in succession, to Sir Hugh Casson, David Astor and Sir Stephen Tumin. All of them continued to encourage access to the arts, recognising Winston Churchill's memorable dictum that: 'there is a treasure in the heart of every man, if only you can find it.' As ever though, Koestler's vision could not and cannot be realised without considerable financial help.

The year 2005 is a special year for the scheme, because it is the centenary of Arthur Koestler's birth. To mark this, a new biography of him is to be published which, it is hoped, will coincide with the annual exhibition. In addition, structural work needs to be done at the Arts Centre at HMP Wormwood Scrubs to expand the facilities for visitors to prisons. Some existing accommodation will have to be relinquished, and a suitable replacement built. This could turn out to be an advantage, because the new structure can be purpose-built, to allow for an extra classroom where ex-prisoners, or those with community sentences, can attend for further instruction. The Trust also hopes to begin mounting a series of regional exhibitions around the country, to enable people outside London to see the value of the work and demonstrate more widely the artistic talent that is locked up in our institutions.

I currently hold the Chairmanship of the Trust, and on behalf of my fellow Trustees, may I thank all members of the Society, and other Kensington residents, who came to support our exhibition this year. I hope that, now you know more about our work, you may feel able to support us, financially or otherwise. As prison numbers go up, the demand for our work increases. Our Director, Dorothy Salmon, will be delighted to explain how you can help.

Dorothy Salmon,
Director, Koestler Awards Trust,
9 Birchmead Avenue,
Pinner, Middlesex HA5 2BG
Tel: 0208 868 4044

Sir David Ramsbotham
Chairman, Koestler Awards Trust

Reports from Local Societies 2004

Editor's note

Many thanks to all those who responded to my plea for a report on the year's events; I was very gratified to receive so many contributions. Some associations have had a particularly busy year, with campaigns for South Kensington station, Victoria Grove sub-Post Office and various other activities. It is very important for Society members to be kept in touch with the local Residents' Associations in this way.

The Brompton Association

The Brompton Association has had a particularly busy year. In addition to commenting on local planning applications, opposing plans by Harrods to extend significantly the night time use of restaurant facilities, and co-ordinating residents' groups' efforts to have PCSOs allocated to Brompton Ward, the issue of what happens at South Kensington has been a major concern. Following the withdrawal of the "gasometer" scheme for the South Kensington Station in December 2003 – the last in a long line of large and inappropriate development proposals for the site going back to the early 1970s – the Association took the view that the time had come to campaign for a fresh approach to be taken at this important site.

In February, together with the Kensington Society and the Chelsea Society, the Association wrote to the Secretary of State at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport to request urgent spot listing. Given that Earl's Court, Gloucester Road and many other comparable underground stations are now listed, it was anomalous that South Kensington – more historic than most as the station built to serve 'Albertopolis' – was not. At the same time as requesting listing, the Association prepared an alternative strategy for the site demonstrating that a major redevelopment is not necessary to achieve improvements. Many of the arguments put forward to justify major

development were shown to be flawed; driven by the prospect of commercial advantage rather than by the public interest. Major redevelopment would be hugely detrimental to the character and amenity of an area which is now regarded as the cultural quarter of London. With plans and illustrations by architect Francis Machin, the concept of a conservation-led approach was outlined in the Association's publication, *A Solution for South Kensington*. This came out in April and won immediate warm support from English Heritage.

Any solution at South Kensington needs to encompass a fundamental change to the present complex gyratory traffic system which dominates the area. The eminent engineer, Alan Baxter, prepared a traffic study for the Association and both this and the alternative strategy for the site were presented to senior Councillors in July. In August, the welcome news that the station is now listed, means that LUL will now have to look seriously at an alternative strategy.

This is timely because as the ideas for improving Exhibition Road are unveiled, it is clear that the existing station, including its attractive Edwardian booking hall, can be sensitively refurbished and modernised. It would fit very well with the aspirations of the Exhibition Road Project, to make the whole area, including the Museum Tunnel, more attractive for pedestrians.

Sophie Blain
Chairman

Campden Hill Residents Association

Work on the former Thames Water site (now known as Wycombe Square) and the former Queen Elizabeth College (now known as The Phillimore's) is almost finished. Completion of these two major projects will signal the end of years of argument, and hopefully will restore calm to the area and reduce the amount of construction traffic. However, as one development is completed, another begins on the site of the former Atkins building. The proposal to rebuild Holland Park School is another major concern. The sale of land to fund the development will reduce the outdoor space for a large

number of pupils. To provide a smaller site will only increase the problems which arise when pupils leave the school premises and spill out into the residential areas.

Major issues during the year have been the sale of the Commonwealth Institute, (which has yet to materialise, meaning that demolition is now a possibility); the future of the former Vicarage Gate Nursing Home, and Congestion Charging. As no final decision has been taken on any of these issues, they will all continue to be discussed.

Anthony Land resigned as editor of our Newsletter during the year and is replaced by Pia Ostby-DeCarlucci. He has also resigned from our Executive Committee, but our loss is the Kensington Society's gain.

The sale of the Coronet Cinema during the year was a major concern, as rumour suggested various alternative uses. Thankfully it is still currently a cinema, but we will be very wary of any future developments.

Opera Holland Park had another successful season and is beginning to establish a reputation for staging some rarely performed operas such as *Stiffelio* and *Luisa Miller*. The quality of performance has soared, but finance remains critical.

Our Annual Garden Party was held for the second time in Campden Hill Square, and was again a great success. The Mayor of Kensington and Chelsea attended, and our Guest of Honour was Sir Malcolm Rifkind.

Our current membership is around 420, and we are always extremely anxious to sign up new members. Our aim is to ensure that we promote and protect the interests of all residents within Campden Hill.

Malcolm Johnstone
Chairman

Campden Street Preservation Society

We are delighted that again the publican at the Churchill Arms has won awards for his marvellous and colourful floral display all round his much-patronised pub. The brewers had proposed to have a

jazz band and dancing for 100 people every night. Each resident in Campden Street and nearby streets wrote to the Council and the idea was abandoned!

We are now opposing the developers who are hoping to build upwards and sideways on a small cottage adjacent to Byam Shaw House. If allowed, this development would occlude light and sun from the terraces of houses. On the other side of the street there is also an ancient wall which would inevitably be destroyed. We are delighted that the ruin that was 25 Campden Street has been bought and refurbished to a very high standard, and is again for sale.

The Chairman is guarding the 'humps' in our street. After a dreadful accident caused by a speeding motorcyclist in Peel Street, the Council agreed that four streets, including ours, should have sleeping policemen. Motorists are now deterred from speeding up our one-way street.

The Chairman does her best to encourage owners to paint the exterior of their houses, and not to leave ugly black bags of rubbish out on the wrong days.

We are delighted that the Robinia, which replaced the wantonly destroyed lime tree, is flourishing. There are blackbirds and blue tits nesting at the top of our street, and the Chairman has also seen a wren. We are of the opinion that the demolition of houses in this Conservation Area must be resisted, and that refurbishment should go on behind the façades.

There is a Neighbourhood Watch in Campden Street, and two households are the co-ordinators. We think that our street is one of the loveliest in Kensington. Two of our residents have lived here since 1947; nearly 60 years.

Evelyn Ellison,
Chairman

Cornwall Gardens Residents' Association

Our year was marked by consolidation and building on previous achievements. We maintained our membership at the level reached in 2003, nearly three times that of 2001/2, and we continued our Discount Card scheme with local merchants, raising the number

of shops in the scheme from 21 to 25. We improved our contacts with neighbouring residents' associations, namely Lexham Gardens, Victoria Road and Kensington Court, with reciprocal attendance at AGMs and social events, and close co-operation on planning and quality of life issues such as protesting the closure of the local Post Office in Victoria Grove in support of the Victoria Road group who led the charge.

We monitored numerous planning applications and supported several which we considered beneficial to the area. Most of those which we opposed were approved, nonetheless. We continued our support for environmental issues such as recycling and warning residents about displaying rubbish on the wrong days or wrong times. We also improved support for the local Neighbourhood Watch by assisting distribution of police reports and memoranda by e-mail.

The usual garden party was not held in 2004 due to necessary refurbishment of the gardens and reseeded of the lawns, but the party is expected to reappear in 2005, along with other social events designed to bring the community closer together, whilst also raising funds for the work of CGRA.

Finally, a new chairman will lead CGRA from the 2004/5 AGM onwards, with best wishes from the undersigned, and with a solid foundation on which to build even greater success in the coming years.

Theodore Bates Wynne
Chairman

Earl's Court Square Residents' Association

The officers of the Association are: Richard Rollefson – Chairman; David Ramsden – Treasurer; Alex Tullett – Secretary. Richard was elected two years ago and re-elected meantime. He will be standing down as Chairman at our AGM in 2005, but he will continue to serve on the committee. During his term of duty he has shown great drive and initiative, and our many extra activities have prospered.

One of these, a 'Michael Portillo Evening', was held with our Member of Parliament as the guest speaker and main attraction. It was held in the historic Poet's House, courtesy of the owners Mr and Mrs Stott. It was very successful, and the tombola raised an astonishing

£600, thanks to the generosity of the 30 or more members who donated prizes. The condition of the buildings in the Square and the garden arrangements within it remain satisfactory.

Douglas AE Eaton

Kensington Court Residents' Association

Like other residents' associations we continued to be concerned about the extension of the Congestion Charge zone; the impact of the new licensing system for pubs, clubs and bars; Post Office closures; mobile phone masts and other common hazards, not to mention 'anti-social behaviour.'

Specifically, we supported the Victoria Road Association in fighting off the installation of mobile phone masts atop Richmond College, very near to residents' windows and to schools. We supported a resident in a long and recently successful battle against noise from a nightclub on the High Street. The fronts of these may look relatively harmless, but they back on to the top of Kensington Court, and can cause noise, smells and other nuisances.

Kensington Court also suffers from litter. This is partly from passers-by discarding fast food debris, but partly also to mess, often outside the same premises. If residents would put the rubbish out on the right day, not in advance, and properly tied up in bags, the problem would be solved. Consular or embassy premises require special handling.

It was sad to lose the sub-Post Office in Victoria Grove – our nearest – despite a vigorous campaign by residents to keep it going. The local pub, the Builders Arms, continues to produce noisy closing times on several days a week, especially in summer when drinkers spill all over the pavements and street. It will be that much worse if and when hours are extended. All we need now is a huge American casino in our area...

It has taken many moons to get the problem of intrusive outdoor seating properly regulated in the passage from Kensington Court to the High Street. It contains three (formerly four) restaurants, and the passage can be obstructed and noise caused to nearby residents. Licensing was split between Planning and Highways

Departments, which did not help.

Finally PCSO's 'bid to reduce anti-social behaviour' has yet to be proved effective.

Sir Ronald Arculus
Chairman

Lexham Gardens Residents' Association

Lexham Gardens continues with its rolling programme of pruning the trees and stocking the garden, and it is a resource much appreciated by all who use it. The children's play area is particularly popular with our younger members. The garden was awarded a 'highly commended' Certificate of Excellence by the Brighter Kensington & Chelsea Scheme.

In 2004, for the first time, we held our annual garden party in conjunction with the Open Squares Day and this attracted many new visitors to the garden. We are planning to do the same in 2005, and will be opening the garden to the public on Saturday 11 June between 10 am and 5 pm.

Sir Cyril Taylor GBE
Chairman

Norland Conservation Society

2004/5 has been a year of real progress – but not without some difficult issues, and heated debate. This time last year, we were doing some soul-searching regarding the way forward for the Society. At the AGM, our role in safeguarding and enhancing the Conservation Area was whole-heartedly confirmed: in other words, more of the same. The view was clear: we would be likely to see some very undesirable things happening quite quickly if we relaxed our vigilance.

That this is true is evidenced by at least two cases where we have fought and lost battles – the complete rebuilding of 13 Norland Place (reported on last year), and the redevelopment of 18 Addison Avenue (which is not listed, and therefore our ability to control façade treatments is restricted). We have now obtained an Article 4 Direction to help us to control further developments in Norland Place, and will be asking the Council to seek Grade II listing for the south end of

Addison Avenue.

Spasmodic outbreaks of Estate Agents' signs are another irritant which detract from the street scene, and we are currently getting to grips with this.

Planning control and protection of the Norland area remains, as always, the core of our activities: we are extremely grateful to Robin Price, Chairman of the Kensington Society, and also our Planning Member, for inspecting, reporting on, and giving our comment to the Council on over 70 cases in the past year. This is very demanding on time, and knowledge of Planning and Conservation powers and practice, and requires discretion and cogent powers of expression.

Extension of the Congestion Charge zone is an ongoing issue, and is by no means resolved. At time of writing, Mayor Ken Livingstone seems to be ignoring some 70 per cent of 100,000 Londoners who voted against the extension. But his plans for extending the Congestion Charge zone into Kensington and Chelsea seem to have been altered, "to take on board concerns that the community will be split in half in southwest Chelsea." Our concern is more for the effect on local retailers, and the fact that we can see no apparent benefit for the Norland area: it seems more like a way to milk more out of car-owners in Norland. We continue to support RBK&C and the Kensington Society in opposing the plans.

Similarly, we maintain our opposition to plans for the West London Tram, and continue to support RBK&C and the Kensington Society in so doing.

Norland Square residents have now decided to replace their chain-link fencing with some fine iron railings – with financial and Gift Aid support from the Norland Conservation Society. This will enormously enhance the Square, and, in fact, the whole Norland area. They are to be congratulated on taking such a major enhancement decision.

Following last year's comment on the Council's Tree Strategy in the Newsletter, we now feel the need for a thoroughly practical tree strategy for Norland: that is on the agenda for this year.

Last year, we were looking to strengthen the Committee and appoint a new Treasurer and Membership Secretary. John Hodgson,

previously our auditor, has kindly taken over as Treasurer. Wendy Woolf has joined the committee as Membership Secretary. We were concerned about falling membership, and undertook a concentrated new member drive. This was highly successful, and we gained about 100 new members, increasing our numbers to 381.

We can now communicate with about 150 of our members by e-mail, when something urgent crops up. This seems to be appreciated by the recipients.

Clive Wilson
Chairman

Onslow Neighbourhood Association

The main talking point during the early part of the year was the Stanhope/Terry Farrell and Partners planning application for South Kensington station. This aroused strong objections from members of the Brompton Association and a number of our members resident near the site. A well-organised campaign resulted in the application being withdrawn and, we understand, the developers and their architect are looking at alternative solutions which might be more favourably received. The objectors, in their turn, have prepared a much smaller proposal which, while it is attractive and would result in having far less impact on the nearby area, we felt did not solve the very pressing congestion problems in the station area, nor the unsatisfactory interchange with the buses in Thurloe Street.

A more general concern is the proliferation of late-night licence extension applications from local bars and take-aways. The Association has objected to a couple for the former, in conjunction with the local residents. With one of these, none of the latter attended. It was hinted that perhaps they were worried about possible intimidation. We wonder whether the recent changes in the format of control and hearing will address this.

The AGM last March was largely concerned with the South Kensington station development, and guest speakers from Transport for London and London Underground were closely questioned by a large audience. Few questions received definite answers, and we seemed to be back on the familiar roundabout: safety, finance and design.

On a happier note, the annual June garden party, in spite of being hastily moved from Onslow Square to St. Paul's Church because of heavy rain, was a great success. Our heartfelt thanks to the parish clergy for their hospitality. Unfortunately, our local councillors were unable to join us because of meetings, but we are grateful to them for their support as always during the year.

Hugh Brady
Chairman

Pembridge Road Residents' Association

My particular responsibility over the last five years has been to our Millennium Project, initiated in 1999 when I was Chairman, and which finally came to fruition in the summer of 2004.

Briefly, the aim of this project was to help residents reinstate the original architectural features missing from the 28 terraced properties on Westbourne Grove, that run from what was the Texaco garage (now Joseph) right along to the Ledbury Road junction. The project also incorporated applying and achieving planning permission for the installation of a continuous, appropriately designed steel balustrade, running the full length of the terrace, that would replace the myriad of temporary solutions to the problem of the delineation of residents' terrace fronts (very messy) with a unifying and attractive permanent feature. It has taken five years to get to the position of achieving planning permission, gained in a one-hit multiple application. We commissioned a terrific specialist architect and surveyor to do the necessary calculations and drawings. The biggest problem was personnel changes, both at the Town Hall and also along the terrace. Keeping tabs on changing property owners was an art in itself! Without going into too much detail, it was an exhausting exercise.

We have now delivered to the Chairman of the Terrace Residents' Association sample reference packages, containing copies of the planning permission and all the elements – designs, drawings and suppliers. We shall now wait and see.

Vicky Butler
former Chairman

Victoria Road Area Residents' Association

The past year has been relatively quiet for this Association and its members, except in two respects – an application for the redevelopment of the Kensington Park Hotel in De Vere Gardens, and the closure of the Post Office in Victoria Grove.

Our members in De Vere Gardens had long complained of the noise in the night from buses and so forth, which they have suffered from the Kensington Park and Kensington Palace Hotels, and consequently they were by no means hostile to a suggested redevelopment of the Kensington Park Hotel into flats. However, the application put forward was for a gross over-development, with no solution for parking for the 138 proposed residential units. Our members in De Vere Gardens instructed a planning consultant with the support and financial assistance of the Association, and his report resulted in the application being withdrawn. This will surely not be the end of the matter, but hopefully the next application for redevelopment will meet the concerns of local residents.

Our battle to save our sub-Post Office – which has been in Victoria Grove for 120 years – makes gloomy reading. When I first heard a rumour of a proposal for closure, I wrote to Adam Crozier, the Chief Executive of the Post Office, mainly to complain about the disgraceful state of our postal deliveries, but also mentioning the rumour. I had no reply to that letter until much later, but on telephoning Mr Crozier's office, I was told there was no proposal for closure. The sub-postmaster was notified of the proposal to close the following day!

A public meeting was arranged on 22 July at Christ Church, Victoria Road, supported by our councillors. The Post Office was given plenty of notice, but they said they had no-one available to attend. Later, as many readers will know, there was a further public meeting arranged by the Council at the Town Hall to consider the possible closure of this Post Office and four others in North Kensington. The Post Office and Postwatch attended this meeting, but the Post Office did little to convince or reassure any of those present. A petition signed by over 2,500 local residents and other users of the Victoria Grove Post Office was handed over at the end of this meeting.

Following the meeting, which was attended by the Chairman of Greater London Postwatch, Kay Dixon. Postwatch argued their case on the grounds of deprivation for the local community, the lack of capacity of other Post Offices in the area to fill the gap, and the lack of accessibility of other Post Offices for existing customers. The most telling comment made by Postwatch was, in my view, as follows: "The importance to the local business and diplomatic community of this Post Office is confirmed by the high proportion of transactions that are mail-related. At 50 per cent, double the national average, this branch is not going to suffer the decline in income that has driven the closure of other branches in Greater London."

The weeks ticked by and we were constantly told that no decision had been reached. The views of Postwatch and the long delay over a decision gave us grounds for hope, but they were to be dashed in mid-November. The Victoria Road sub-Post Office was closed on 30 November – three weeks before Christmas. A focal point of the local community in Gloucester Road (North) has been lost. It is, to me, quite incredible that the Post Office shows so little concern for the interests of its customers.

Peter Dixon
Chairman

EVENTS 2005

Tuesday 15 March Party at the Brompton Oratory, SW7

This is a cheerful party with wine and canapés to celebrate Kensington with the Brompton Association and the Knightsbridge Association. The three societies have worked closely on such issues as South Kensington station and the V&A Spiral. Why not meet those from our associated societies and celebrate?

Time: 6.30-8.30pm

Price: £16.00 per person

Location: St. Wilfred's Hall, entrance first on left within Oratory forecourt on 1st floor. There is no lift.

Wednesday 13 April Trip to Canterbury Cathedral

This is a wonderful opportunity to enjoy a special guided tour by Professor John Butler, historian and authorised guide to the Cathedral, from 11 am to 1 pm, followed by a simple lunch at Ferri's (immediately outside the Close) at personal choice and cost. Thereafter we are free to explore (Roman Museum recommended) until coach departure at 4pm. The price includes coach and tour and admission fees at concessionary rates

Time: Meet at 9 am sharp

Price: £31.50 per person

Location: outside 15 Kensington Square, W8

Wednesday 11 May Royal Hospital, Chelsea SW3

This privileged visit from 10am-12.30pm will be led by a well-informed Pensioner Tour Guide, beginning with coffee and biscuits at 10am in the magnificent State Apartments, and ending in the museum.

Time: tour starts at 10am

Price: £12.50 per person

Location: ask at the London Gate in Royal Hospital Road for directions to the State Apartments

Thursday 16 June

Sutton Hoo, Woodbridge, Suffolk

This Anglo-Saxon royal burial site is one of the most important in this country's archaeological history, now in the hands of the National Trust. The visit includes an Exhibition Hall which gives the story of the site; the burial ground itself and a number of walks. We plan to make an early start.

Time: meet promptly for

Price: £25 per person

9.15am departure

(covers coach transport only)

Location: outside 15 Kensington Square W8

Guests are welcome at any of these events

KENSINGTON SOCIETY BOOKING FORM

| Date | No. | Name of Event | Fee payable |
|---------|-----|---------------|-------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Total £ | | | |

1. Please enter your bookings in date order.
2. When you have completed the booking form make out a cheque payable to "The Kensington Society" (crossed "Account Payee only" if not already printed on cheque), and sign it - but do not fill in an amount. However, to protect yourself, write at the bottom of the cheque 'Amount not to exceed £ ' (amount shown in total).
3. Forward booking form, cheque and a stamped addressed envelope to **Mrs Dianne Gabitass, 37 Kensington Place, W8 7PR**. The booking form will be processed and any events not available marked on it. Your cheque will then be completed and banked, and your booking form returned to you in your S.A.E.

YOUR NAME
(block letters please)

ADDRESS
.....
.....

Telephone number

Please add any suggestions for future visits
.....

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. Subscriptions are payable on January 1st each year and shall be such sum or sums as shall be determined from time to time by the Executive Committee.
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 byelaws; (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 Accounts 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 member 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 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.

MEMBERSHIP

I wish to become a member of The Kensington Society

I enclose the sum of £ for my annual subscription

Name: (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Title)

Address

Signature Date

Corporate Membership: £25 **Annual Subscription: £10**

Affiliated Societies: £10

Annual Subscription will simplify the collection of their subscriptions if they will fill in the Banker's order

Cheques should be made payable to: "The Kensington Society"

BANKERS ORDERS

TO BANK

..... ADDRESS OF BANK

..... ACCOUNT NUMBER

Please immediately pay Barclays Bank PLC, Kensington (20-47-34) to the credit of The Kensington Society (70519138) my subscription of £ and continue the same on January 1st until further notice.

Name: (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Title)

Address

Signature Date

Please Return to:

**The Membership Secretary, The Kensington Society
c/o 2 Campden Hill Court, Observatory Gardens, London W8 7HX
(Tel: 020 7937 2750)**

The Kensington Society

Receipts and payments account for the year ended 31 December 2004

| 1 | GENERAL CORE FUND | 2004 | 2003 |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | | £ | £ |
| Receipts | | | |
| Voluntary sources | | | |
| Subscriptions | 5,253.15 | 4,741.20 | |
| Donations | 535.00 | 3,385.87 | |
| Legacy | 0.00 | 20,754.40 | |
| Receipts from current year visits | 2,324.50 | 2,532.50 | |
| Receipts for 2005 visits | <u>713.00</u> | <u>0.00</u> | |
| | | 8,825.65 | 31,413.97 |
| Trading activities | | | |
| Advertising in annual report | | 200.00 | 660.00 |
| Income from assets | | | |
| Interest | | <u>1,164.70</u> | <u>548.39</u> |
| | | | |
| | total receipts | <u>10,190.35</u> | <u>32,622.36</u> |
| Payments | | | |
| Direct charitable expenditure | | | |
| Charitable activities | 2,421.25 | 2,543.60 | |
| Visits | <u>1,049.65</u> | <u>1,023.09</u> | |
| | | 3,470.90 | 3,566.69 |
| Other expenditure | | | |
| Annual report | 2,428.27 | 2,739.95 | |
| Stationery / printing | 1,063.53 | 1,573.99 | |
| Postage / telephone | 672.68 | 688.04 | |
| Typing | 221.38 | 422.93 | |
| Meeting room hire | 149.38 | 205.87 | |
| Subscriptions | 105.00 | 171.50 | |
| Catering | 237.36 | 863.31 | |
| Accounts | 350.00 | 350.00 | |
| Insurance | 0.00 | 420.00 | |
| Advertising | 85.00 | 0.00 | |
| | | <u>5,312.60</u> | <u>7,435.59</u> |
| | | | |
| | total payments | <u>8,783.50</u> | <u>11,002.28</u> |
| Net receipts /(payments) for the year | | 1,406.85 | 21,620.08 |
| Bank balances B/F | | 44,843.39 | 23,223.31 |
| Bank balances C/F | | <u>46,250.24</u> | <u>44,843.39</u> |

Statement of assets and liabilities at 31 December, 2004

| | Princess Alice Memorial Fund | General Core Fund | 2004 Total | 2003 Total |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Monetary assets | | | | |
| High interest deposit account | 0.00 | 2.31 | 2.31 | 2.31 |
| National Savings Account | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Current account General Core Fund | 0.00 | 4,116.84 | 4,116.84 | 3,874.69 |
| CAF Cash account | <u>2,370.41</u> | <u>42,131.09</u> | <u>44,501.50</u> | <u>43,336.80</u> |
| | <u>2,370.41</u> | <u>46,250.24</u> | <u>£48,620.65</u> | <u>£47,213.80</u> |

TREASURER'S REPORT 2004

The Society had a robust Financial Year in 2004, with income exceeding expenditure by £1,406.85. Subscription income of £5,523.15 was slightly up on the previous year and Cash and Reserves are £48,620.65, which leaves the Society well placed for 2005.

Anthony Lee

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The Blue Cross rehomes thousands of animals each year and provides veterinary care for the pets of people who cannot afford private vets fees.

We rely entirely on donations to continue our vital work. We are grateful to the Kensington Society and especially the support and generosity of the late Mrs Gay Christiansen.



For more information on our work please contact:

**The Blue Cross Head Office, Shilton Road,
Burford, Oxon. OX18 4PF**

Tel: 01993 822651 Fax: 01993 823083

Website: www.bluecross.org.uk

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