

THE

Kensington Society



Annual Report 2007

THE

Kensington Society

12 Princedale Road, W11 4NJ

www.kensingtonsociety.org

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 2007

The Churchill Arms in Kensington Church Street is one of the prettiest pubs in London with its overflowing hanging baskets which cover the façade from the roof to street level. At the 2007 Chelsea Flower Show the pub won the 'Boozer In Bloom' prize.

The Kensington Society

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EDITOR, ANNUAL REPORT: Carolyn Starren
LICENSING: Anthony Lee

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From the President

The media ended 2007 in deep gloom, much intensified in January (as I write). So I thought in my annual homily I should instead count our blessings as Kensingtonians.

When I was pacing up and down in the cold outside the V & A Museum a few years ago now, being filmed objecting to the Libeskind addition to the museum (since scrapped), I recalled some of our different local streetscapes. I pictured the red brick canyons of mansion blocks, the great white stucco terraces off Queen's Gate, the intimate streets of houses in brick and stucco, with their blossom trees and neat front gardens, the great museum buildings themselves, the broad spaces of the unique Albertopolis. I thought of the garden squares, hanging baskets of flowers on the black lamp posts; the occasional statue, the London plane trees - the whole giving a generally furnished and civilised impression. In this setting the Libeskind would have been too incongruous.

Foreign visitors particularly admire and envy the London parks, and we have Kensington Gardens and a much-improved Holland Park. The flower beds are of a quality rarely achieved abroad, despite the ravages of squirrels and pigeons.

We have churches for various denominations, some with small gardens, well-kept. We have streets with a particular character, such as Kensington Church Street with its antique shops or Portobello with its market. There are some mini-shopping streets of great value to residents, such as Thackeray Street or Stratford Road. Many blue plaques mark our culture and history. There are prep and other schools; and cultural institutions such as the French, German and Polish. Restaurants and caf  s abound. In the High Street you can choose from a dozen places to take your morning coffee. There is the Town Hall, controversial when it replaced the elegant old one, but now familiar and giving space for many cultural, professional, civic and charitable occasions.

The English are great supporters of clubs and societies, and here we have a good choice of meeting venues, e.g. the Royal Geographical Society, the French Institute, Leighton House and the Town Hall. High-quality lectures are held in these and other venues. For music we have the refurbished Albert Hall, the new Cadogan Hall and some churches. For theatre there is the Royal Court. The Royal College of Music provides concerts, and opera in its exquisite Britten Theatre. There is also a symphony orchestra, as Chelsea has The Chelsea Opera Group. A unique asset is the refurbished Linley Sambourne House.

There are museums and art galleries, and a number of surviving artists' studios, mostly now private houses. There are orangeries in Kensington Gardens and Holland Park where functions are held. In the latter park there is the increasingly popular summer opera season which triumphs over rain and the cries of peacocks. We have bookshops and particularly good libraries. Kensington Palace has also been spruced up and much of it open to the public.

Public transport is a popular whipping boy, but we do have plenty of it, as well as hire-car facilities and abundant (though costly) taxis, I have a 'love/hate' relationship with the No. 9 bus which I have been using on and off since the early '50s, and which at times seemed to be an endangered species. Though there is little pedestrianisation so far, many of our journeys can be made on foot, more bicycles are being used, and parking restrictions give residents reasonable protection.

London, like Paris and New York, has been termed a collection of villages with distinct personalities. Kensington itself contains various mini-villages, neighbourhoods or quarters. These have a cosy, friendly air which makes for a more pleasant and neighbourly living. North Kensington is admittedly a different story, but improvements have been made and more are planned.

So we are, on the whole, most fortunate to live in a richly endowed environment which many envy, but which needs vigilant protection. Groups of visitors are daily led around by

voluble guides. The tourists can be seen eyeing our blue plaques for explanation and stories. The other day we overheard a guide who stopped his flock on a corner of Kensington Square, the birthplace of your Society. The English aristocracy, he opined, 'lived in squares, moved in circles, but loved in triangles' - on which slightly risqué note I will end.

Sir Ronald Arculus, President



HRH The Duke of Gloucester, escorted by Sir Ronald Arculus, is greeted by General The Lord Ramsbotham and the Mayor, Cllr. Tim Ahern, on his arrival at the AGM

Annual General Meeting 2007

The 54th Annual General Meeting was held at the Maria Assumpta Centre, Kensington Square, on 24 April 2007. The Society's President, Sir Ronald Arculus, opened the proceedings by welcoming the Society's Patron, HRH The Duke of Gloucester, the Mayor of Kensington, Cllr Tim Ahern, and other distinguished guests. Sir Ronald said how deeply grateful the Society was that His Royal Highness had found time to come to the AGM and invited him to say a few words.

The Duke of Gloucester complimented the Society on its work and gave particular praise for the school prize. He was particularly impressed by the high standards achieved by young people today. The Duke spoke amusingly about his forebear, George IV, and how he was looking forward to Lord Baker's talk on his ancestor who did not enjoy the best of reputations. He reminded the audience of Beau Brummel's famous remark 'And who is your fat friend?'

Sir Ronald then introduced the 'menu' for the evening's proceedings. The first item being the presentation of the prizes



introduced by the Chairman, Robin Price. The Chairman said that this was the fourth year that the prize had been awarded. Pupils were asked to design a leaflet encouraging young people to visit Kensington Palace. He thanked Nigel Arch at Kensington Palace for offering free passes to competition entrants. Further details and some of the winning entries can be found on page 58. He congratulated all for their commendable entries and especially applauded the six prize winners. He invited the Duke of Gloucester to make the presentations.

Sir Ronald then introduced Lord Baker of Dorking. He noted his distinguished political career and praised him as an author.



Lord Baker's interesting and informative talk was copiously illustrated by slides from his own large collection of political caricatures which gave the audience a unique insight into how the King, and earlier when Prince Regent and earlier still, when Prince of Wales, fared at caricaturists' hands. Copies of Lord Baker's book were available for purchase at the end of the meeting.

Sir Ronald then chaired the business part of the AGM. The minutes of the AGM as set out in the Annual Report were

confirmed and the accounts adopted. The election of officers followed and it was noted that following the retirement of Ethne Rudd, Loveday Waymouth was taking over as Hon. Secretary. All were elected unopposed.

Amanda Frame, Chair of the Planning Committee gave her report on planning issues that had arisen during the year. She started by saying that it had been a very active year and that it was impossible to review all the issues addressed. She outlined the major items: Holland Park School, casino applications, changes to De Vere Gardens, redevelopment of the Kensington Odeon, the impact of subterranean developments, the 'Tesco Tower' and the Warwick Road site. Full details of these and other issues can be found on page 38. She concluded by saying, 'The Council needs to move from a reactive and negative approach to controlling development to a more proactive and positive style of planning. Instead of being led by developers the Council needs to set out a clear vision of the kinds of development wanted. A new style of planning reflecting the needs of a much more sophisticated process is needed. We continue to work with the Council to push for these changes. This is the challenge that faces the Kensington Society in 2007.'

The Chairman, Robin Price, then gave his update to the Annual Report. A fuller version is available on page 11. He thanked Amanda Frame for all her hard work on behalf of the Society and its members. He also thanked Carolyn Starren for the excellent Annual Report. On planning matters he talked of the Vicarage Gate judgement and thanked Cllr Buckmaster for his efforts. He also commented that the Commonwealth Institute had been acquired by the Ilchester Estate which is inviting architects to submit proposals.

He discussed the RBKC Commission on Retail Conservation, full details of which can be found on page 64. He then bade farewell to Michael French who was retiring as Executive Director of Planning and Conservation and welcomed David Prout, the incoming Executive Director of Planning and Borough Development.

Turning to the Executive Committee he noted with regret the resignation of Valerie Heathorn and welcomed Gill Foley on to the committee as Events Secretary. He thanked Dianne Gabbitass for her work on events over the past ten years.

He then said 'Sadly Ethne Rudd is resigning as Hon. Secretary after 14 years in post. She has been a thoroughly upfront force to be reckoned with. She intends to continue with the newsletter and to remain on the committee. There will be a presentation of a bouquet and a standard rose will be delivered to her home as a



small gesture of thanks for all she has done for us.' He wished Loveday Waymouth every success in the post and invited her to make the presentation to Ethne Rudd.

Robin Price concluded with his annual appeal for new members.

There being no questions the proceedings were closed at 8.43 pm.

AGM 2008

The Society's Annual General Meeting will take place on Tuesday 29 April at the Kensington Close Hotel, Wrights Lane W8 5SP.

Doors open at 6.30 pm and the meeting will begin at 7.00 pm. This year's speaker will be Mr David Prout, Executive Director of Planning and Borough Development of the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea. A glass of wine will precede the meeting.

Chairman's Report 2007

The year has seen a continuing escalation in the variety, complexity and volume of the Society's work.

Our increased professional approach is due to the energy and expertise of our Planning Chairman, Amanda Frame, and the planning knowledge and experience of Michael Bach. Together they attend numerous planning meetings, improve planning briefs, and respond to endless consultations, personal planning objectors, and a wide variety of planning proposals. This represents a major input of time and commitment, and we should all be grateful to them for reinforcing our democratic representation in seeking to improve and maintain the quality of our urban environment. The Planning Chairman's Report deals in detail with these concerns.

We face many difficulties, not least from the desire of government to give **householder rights of development**, even within designated Conservation Areas, and without recourse to planning permission. In an increasingly competitive and acquisitive society this means the devastation of our and other unique historic urban environments throughout the country. We are vigorously opposing such demeaning proposals by all the means in our power. To date, this and many of our more local planning issues, remain moving targets. Be assured that we are dealing with them, almost always in entire agreement with, and in support of, the Royal Borough, which indeed leads in this and in many other matters of amenity concern. We are grateful to have such an active, able and committed Council.

Its new planning direction and activity is due not a little to David Prout, Executive Director of Planning and Borough Development. We were impressed by the scope, detail and discernment of the planning brief for the **Commonwealth Institute** site, though we share some of the reservations of the Friends of Holland Park about total permeability between Holland Park and the Commonwealth Institute. We have commented in detail on the

all important planning brief for **Warwick Road**, a considerable improvement on planning briefs previously issued by the Council, and in this case an absolute, if much delayed, necessity for the integrated development of this neglected western boundary of Kensington.

The **Exhibition Road** consultations continue with input from the Brompton Association, the Knightsbridge Association, and local amenity societies and residents. We view the proposals as innovative and exciting, providing the opportunity to unite a revised traffic gyratory system at South Kensington and the station itself (possibly to be refurbished), with the museums and Albert Hall area, and ultimately, we hope, with Hyde Park. This project, too, remains a moving target, and we intend to be associated with developments in the planning process. We have entered our reservations on problems related to the single surface as proposed, on traffic flow and bus delivery points.

The **Vicarage Gate Care Home** saga remains as reported in our Christmas Newsletter 2007. No date is yet set down for the second hearing before HM Planning Inspector. We continue, with the Council, to object to the change of use of the site. Cllr Christopher Buckmaster, to whom we remain extremely grateful, continues to lead the objections before the Inspectorate, and the Society serves on the Vicarage Gate Action Group.

The Royal Borough's **Commission on Retail Conservation**, whose composition and directions were outlined in my 2006 statement, and on which your Chairman represented residents of the Royal Borough, reported to the Council in May 2007. Its recommendations, many of them radical, were widely reported in the local and national press, and have found favour and followers among other local authorities. Of its 54 recommendations, the Council accepted 45, either to put to central government, or to do itself. These include recommendations to HMG to place small shops (as re-defined by the Commission), coffee shops and internet cafés in Use Classes of their own, to amend legislation to require planning permission for mergers of ground floor retail units, and much else to support the small retailers so essential

to local communities. An outline of the salient recommendations can be found on page 64 of the Annual Report.

The **Kensington Society School Prizes** continue as reported elsewhere in this Annual Report (see page 38). We aim for still greater participation of secondary schools, which markedly increased last year. We hope that all the secondary schools in Kensington will have taken part in the current year. It has proved a successful venture, supportive to the community and to the schools as it can be used as part of the National Curriculum. It is right too that it raises the profile of your Society and engages the interest of the young who are educated in the Borough.

Passing to your **Executive Committee**, **Valerie Heathorn**, to the Committee's regret, resigned in the course of the year. We thank her for her services. **Dianne Gabitass**, while remaining on the Committee, resigned as Events Secretary, and her place in that role was taken by **Gill Foley**, formerly Chairman of Kensington and Chelsea National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts (NADFAS). We express our particular gratitude to Dianne Gabitass for her quiet and unfailing efficiency and inventiveness over some ten years in that arduous role, and we welcome Gill Foley who, as members will know, is already demonstrating her own brand of efficiency, experience and innovative skills in arranging events.

But all will agree that our major loss from the Committee and its activities this year must be **Ethne Rudd** who first resigned as Hon. Secretary to great lament, and later in the year insisted, against all blandishments, on resigning from the Committee. After some 14 years in post, following in the most difficult and demanding footsteps of the redoubtable Mrs Christiansen, and doing it with great aplomb, it is entirely understandable that she felt she had done all she could, in fact far more. Her voice and views have never been far absent from representing Kensington at all levels, and it was the voice and representation that was needed. The **Newsletter** was her idea, and its creation her invention. Countless details of meetings, AGMs, and much else, have fallen to her, and we all miss her exuberant and efficient



HRH The Duke of Gloucester, Lord Baker of Dorking (on left) and Robin Price (on right) at the AGM

presence. We thank her most warmly for her devotion to the spirit and nature of Kensington over so many years. We are delighted that she will serve on the Council of the Society.

It is good to know that in short order **Loveday Waymouth**, already our Minutes Secretary, stepped into the breach, and is already doing great work for us, not least in arranging our 2008 AGM, with some difficulty, in a new meeting place. We are grateful to her for taking on this demanding role.

I must also record that your Committee hopes to co-opt to the Committee a **Publicity Secretary** to ensure that our activities are known to a wider public.

This brings me to my traditional but heartfelt plea for new and younger members. We remain, not without continuous effort, at our stable number of some 630 members. Further effort by all existing members should drive numbers up to at least 700. Please redouble your efforts to persuade, induce, cajole neighbours, new residents, longstanding residents and non-residents, to join in order to preserve and enhance our unique environment. You get a lot for £10.00! The best bargain in the UK! Please contact the Membership Secretary at 2 Campden Hill Court, London W8 7HX or complete the membership form on our website www.kensingtonsociety.org.

Robin Price, Chairman

Obituaries

It is with sadness that we report the death of the following members:

Sir Ian Anstruther of that Ilk, writer and landowner, was born 11 May 1922 and died on 29 July 2007. He inherited the Alexander Estate from his aunt, Joan Campbell, in 1960. Although he maintained a house on the estate, he mainly lived on the Barlavington Estate, West Sussex or in his home above the St Tropez hills. He was a generous benefactor and patron of the arts. In February 1984 he gave the Alexander Estate papers on indefinite loan to Kensington and Chelsea Local Studies. He was a life member of The Kensington Society from 1967.

Fiona, Viscountess Craigavon born in 1918, and died on 6 November 2007 at the age of 89. She was the widow of James Craig, 2nd Viscount Craigavon (1906-1939). She lived in Launceston Place for sixty years and was a member of The Kensington Society from 1977.

Mr G H B Tregear of East Marden, Chichester died on 13 June, 2006. He took out life membership with the Society in 1970.

Reginald Thomas (Tom) Dorrien Wilmot was born on 11 March, 1915. He became chief executive of the British Insurance Association in 1946 after the industry moved to establish its first professional organisation. He held the post until 1971.

For the last 30 years of his life he devoted himself to City affairs, in particular the Corporation of London and City livery companies. In 1973 he was elected a common councilman for the ward of Cordwainer which he served until 2003, latterly as deputy. He served on several committees and spent a great deal of time and effort fighting for better architectural standards. He was a strong supporter of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and a member of the Council of The Kensington Society for many years. He died on 15 February, 2007, aged 91.

The Beginnings of Holland Park School

In April 1949, the London County Council (LCC) announced a plan to build a multilateral school for 2000 pupils on Campden Hill. Initial opposition focussed on two aspects – social and educational. The Campden Hill Preservation Fund Committee, which had fought off an earlier plan to build flats on the site, at first opposed the plan, fearing that ‘a large school would ruin the amenities’. At the Public Enquiry in 1953, counsel for the Phillimore Estate declared ‘great quantities of children...drawn from Kensal Green, Harlesden and beyond.... [would] create chaos each morning... reducing Camden Hill to Earl’s Court.’ The choice of names perhaps implied a class prejudice. The High Commissioner for South Africa was afraid the four-storey building would ‘dominate his study and the grounds of his house’, and that children walking along Campden Hill, a public road, ‘might be a nuisance to garden parties’. The LCC obligingly conceded the latter point, and for ten years pupils were forbidden to use what was for many the shortest route to school.

On educational philosophy, Mr F A Roebuck (thirty years a resident) described the school in the local press as ‘an educational abortion’, and explained that ‘one purpose of a ‘comprehensive’ school is the promotion of what its authors and associates are pleased to call ‘the classless society’... LCC planners hope to misuse it to further their social revolutionary plans... This proposed vast factory, mass-producing units for the pre-fabrication of the classless dictatorship of the proletariat is *monstrum nulla virtute redemptum a vitiis*. Perhaps, for certain members of the LCC, I may be allowed to construe...a monster redeemed by not a single virtue’.

Another correspondent, C Le Breton-Simmons, described the school (for which no architect had yet even been briefed) as a ‘ghastly gargantuan gasometer’, where, he fulminated,

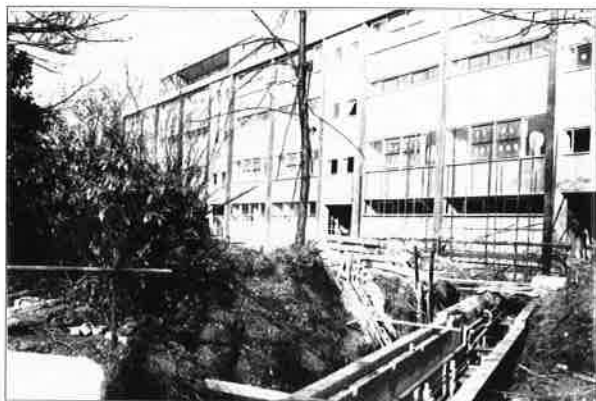
‘synthetic scholarship will help inoculate herd instinct in the new generation’. The overlap of social and educational prejudices is shown by his ending his letter with another Latin tag (which he did not deign to translate for the benefit of the LCC) *Odi profanum vulgus et arceo* (Editors note: I hate the common herd and stand aloof). Later, Labour Councillor Mrs Anna Grieves, speaking at County Hall, gave, aptly if unintentionally, a free translation: ‘they don’t want Board School brats in Kensington.’

In a later letter Mr Roebuck changed tactics, calling on those who wished to ‘protect the minds of children from contamination by a bestial egalitarianism’ to ‘seek to have the new comprehensive school changed to a multilateral school. The only serious fault might then be excessive numbers’. Here he anticipated Tory arguments of a quarter of a century later, accepting a comprehensive framework but advocating streaming and setting within it – i.e. the preservation under one roof of the 1945 Butler tripartite segregation of academic, technical and secondary modern schools. Indeed the LCC never gave a clear lead on the academic or pastoral aims of a comprehensive school. The ‘c-word’ was not even mentioned at the school’s opening ceremony.

Not surprisingly, in its early years the school tended to cautious conservatism, being ‘broad-banded’ if not streamed, with ability-setting in academic subjects from the Second Year and segregation of the Fourth Year into academic, technical, commercial and ‘general’ bands – the latter consisting of the 14-year-old leavers: effectively a multilateral system. The pastoral side was organised on a ‘House’ system – a public school idea – the eight Houses being named after local worthies: Addison, Fox, Hunter, Macaulay, Maine, Newton, Norman and Wilberforce – all men. The school’s badge – a roundel showing a fox with a dahlia in its mouth – commemorates the Holland family name and the introduction of garden dahlias to England by Lady Holland in 1804.

The Campden Hill Preservation Fund Committee soon came to accept the school. It was deciding at its winding-up meeting (held,

ironically, in Thorpe Lodge, which was preserved and adapted for school use) to have its picture-map of the area framed and presented to the school, and to hand over its final cash balance (£20) to The Kensington Society. This was earmarked for a prize for an essay on Kensington by a member of the school. The Kensington Society increased the sum to £50: 'from the income of which a prize will be presented each year for the best essay on Kensington'. Julian Aston (who later went to the London School of Economics) was the first prize winner in 1959, with an essay entitled *Campden House and Baptist Hicks (1551-1629)*, Leonard Hobbs (a Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award winner who went on to Cambridge) being a close runner-up with his essay *Medieval Kensington*.



Holland Park School under construction in the late 1950s

The school unquestionably enjoys one of the most beautiful sites in London. The architect, Sir Leslie Martin of the Royal Festival Hall, preserved most of Campden Hill's trees; the garden of Thorpe Lodge with its pleached alley of limes (one of only three in London) and the proximity of Holland Park itself, its trees bordering the west and south playgrounds, create an environment of inestimable value in shaping the minds and spirits of pupils. It is fervently hoped that the school's rebuilding will not in any way cramp this sense of openness and humanity.

In September 1958 the press was more occupied with the Notting

Hill race riots than with the school's opening. The First Year intake represented the whole social gamut – Holland Park School was never a privileged middle-class school – and included already thirty-five different nationalities, soon to become fifty. Although at first the school imitated the traditional grammar school – with gowns, 'high table' for the senior staff, and a Latin motto – over the years it evolved a truly comprehensive structure and ethos. This began by unstreaming the First Year pupils (thus refusing to perpetuate primary school judgements) and working towards a common curriculum for the years of compulsory schooling (so pupils' would not make too many early curricular decisions which affected their ultimate choice of career). Staff tried to value equally all pupils and their potential.

Holland Park had at its start absorbed secondary modern schools in North Kensington and with the amalgamation with Ladbrooke Girls' and Isaac Newton Boys' schools it became the only state secondary school in the Royal Borough. It came to be regarded nationally – even internationally – as an educational power-house and attracted visitors from all over the world, from the USA to the USSR.

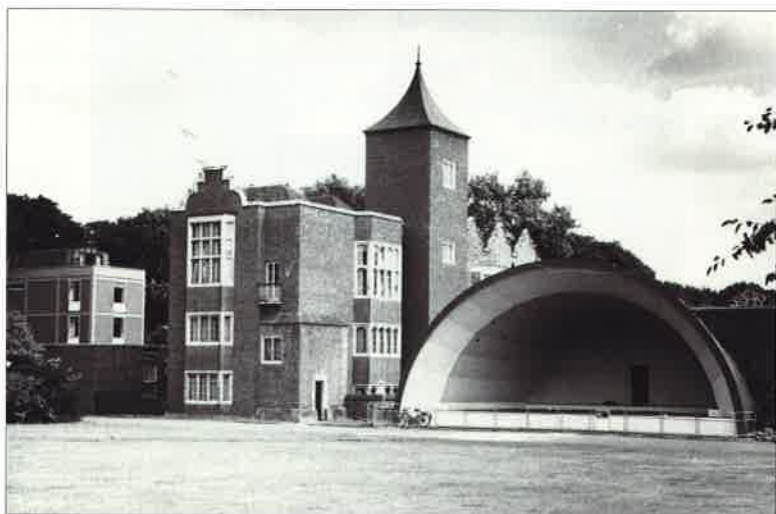
Long may it flourish!

F D Rushworth

Editor's note: Dr. Rushworth has a unique insight into Holland Park School from the initial planning stage. He was appointed Head of Modern Languages in April 1958 and taught in that capacity until December 1965, when he was appointed Head of Shoreditch School. Dr. Rushworth was appointed Head of Holland Park School in September in 1971, retiring in 1985, and then co-opted as a Governor of the school from 1990 -1995. Two of his daughters received all their secondary schooling there.

Opera in Holland Park

Opera Holland Park (OHP) is a company of some youth - *Un Ballo in Maschera* (1996) was the inaugural production - one among a plethora of 'rented' productions and ballet. But there have been performing arts on this site for many decades. This author recalls being dragged along as a six year old to see the Royal Ballet School - sans cover of course - and I don't mind telling you that the year was 1971. We discovered some beautiful colour news footage on the Pathe website (search their website under 'Holland Park Theatre') of flamenco dancers performing in front of the house, neat topiary in pots lining the stage. The façade of the house looked in far better condition than it currently does. And the house that you see now forming the backdrop is indeed merely a ruin of a once great house.



The 'Music Bowl' beside Holland Park in 1969

Holland House was built in 1605 for Sir Walter Cope. It was one of the first 'great houses' of Kensington, and during England's Civil War it was occupied by members of Cromwell's army. The house was apparently in its prime in the early 19th century when the

hospitality of Henry Fox, 3rd Baron Holland, and his wife became famous. The mansion was purchased in the late 18th century by Henry Fox, grandfather of the 3rd baron. It became a magnet for English liberals and other distinguished men: the great and good would attend the famous dinners at the house and most ironic and fitting of all is the documented frequency of Sir Walter Scott's attendance. His book, *Bride of Lammermoor* was the basis for Donizetti's opera and it is a work we have performed at least twice, most recently to breathtaking effect in 2003.

The house was bombed in the Blitz in 1940 and from then on remained a ruined shell of a building. Under the London County Council (LCC), and then, for many years under the Greater London Council (GLC), the house was the venue of myriad arts events including jazz, world music, comedy, dance, theatre and sundry curiosities. In 1987 it came under the care and ownership of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea who continued to run a varied programme.



The entrance to Opera Holland Park today

In 1988, the canopy was installed and thence began the true development of the venue as a flexible space for music of all kinds, including opera. Noise and sound regulations forced a change in direction at that time too and the then manager of the theatre, Mick Goggin, decided that opera might be worth a try. It is fair to say that there was a long line of people suggesting that he was mad and that it would never work. But he persevered

and invited several companies to produce opera and it soon became clear that an appetite of sorts existed and the popularity of the theatre grew. Companies like Opera Lirica and Court Opera brought a great variety of mainly popular pieces into the space and an audience was developing. The company began ambitiously with Anthony Besch's production of *Un Ballo in Maschera* and within three years, having given Mascagni's *Iris* (twice), Menotti's *The Consul* and Cilea's *L'Arlesiana*, OHP had developed a reputation for giving works that were unusual - and that tradition continues to this day of course.

Fast forward to 2007 when a new spectacular canopy was installed and a luxurious new seating structure was designed which now accommodates just over 1000 patrons. The theatre space is beautifully landscaped and features a number of facilities of which indoor theatres would be proud. The entire season is now produced in-house by Opera Holland Park and the 2008 season is one of the most ambitious ever. It opens with Verdi's magnificent *Il Trovatore* which will be performed in repertory with Donizetti's delightful *La Fille du Regiment*. In the middle of the season are two big popular pieces - Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, directed by Simon Callow and conducted by Jane Glover, which will be in repertory with Puccini's shocker, *Tosca*. The final two operas will be Tchaikovsky's fabulous fairytale *Iolanta* and the grandest of Grand Opera, Ponchielli's lavish *La Gioconda*.

Mike Volpe, General Manager,
KORN/FERRY Opera Holland Park

KORN/FERRY INTERNATIONAL

Opera Holland Park

2008 SEASON

Il Trovatore by Giuseppe Verdi

June 3, 5, 7, 12, 14, 18, 20
Charity Gala in aid of NSPCC on June 10

La Fille du régiment by Gaetano Donizetti

June 4, 6, 11, 13, 17, 19, 21

The Magic Flute by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

June 28, 30, July 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12

Tosca by Giacomo Puccini

July 1, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13
Charity Gala in aid of Venice in Peril on July 9

La Gioconda by Amilcare Ponchielli

July 22, 24, 26, 30, August 1, 5, 7, 9

Iolanta by Pyotr Tchaikovsky

July 25, 29, 31, August 2, 6, 8

Booking Information

Priority postal booking for Opera Holland Park Friends opens on 6 February 2008.

To join the Friends, contact Opera Holland Park Friends on 020 7361 3910 or email friends@operahollandpark.com

Booking opens to the general public on **7 April 2008**.

Box office 0845 230 976

Environment Award Scheme 2007

The Royal Borough possesses some of the finest buildings, groups of buildings and townscape in the country. The Council is proud of this heritage and is concerned to ensure that new development is of appropriate quality.

To this end, 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. The awards, initiated in 1977, are grouped into categories and nominated buildings are assessed by a panel of judges. Cllr. Terence Buxton, Chairman of the panel was joined by David Prout, Executive Director of Planning and Borough Development, Susan Walker, Director's nominee, Amanda Frame, The Kensington Society, Gina Ware, The Chelsea Society and Janie Renton, Action Disability Kensington and Chelsea.

The Kensington Society is particularly pleased to note the award to Tesco Express. The improvements, which have since been rolled out to other stores in conservation areas, were largely the result of successful negotiations between the Society's planning committee and Tesco Express management.

GENERAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

Tesco Express, Holland Park Avenue

'...this Tesco Express premises particularly impressed the Assessors because of its elegantly detailed frontage within a carefully restored architectural framework... The corporate image is restrained, the lighting is reported to be far superior to what was there before, and adverts and graphics which, until recently, cluttered the windows of many such premises have all been eliminated... Accessibility arrangements inside and out have clearly been carefully considered.'



**Designed by: Auket Tytherleigh,
Atlantic Court, 77 Kings Road, London SW3 4NX**

Redcliffe Square

This reinstatement of boundary railings was considered excellent. Pains have been taken to have every detail right, and nothing has been skimped in respecting the best traditions of Victorian metalwork. It was very apparent at the time of the visit that the space is a much-enjoyed local amenity and those Assessors not part of the Council described the scheme as a great public gesture.



**Designed by: West Waddy ADP, The Malthouse,
60 East St Helen Street, Abingdon OX14 5EB**

NEW BUILDING

No. 1 Wetherby Gardens

This new house was admired for its careful and sensitive ordering of form and detail. It was particularly recognised as being 'not a greedy building', its massing having been carefully considered and limited to what the site can comfortably accommodate. The relationship to the hedge and railings on the site frontage was recognised as a particularly sensitive touch by the designers.

Designed by: Gregory Mihalcheon for Auric Michelob Design



ENHANCED ACCESSIBILITY

Brompton Oratory

The Assessors recognised the considerable design challenge posed by the brief to create enhanced accessibility, where the Grade II* listed building has such a consistent aesthetic integrity. Resolution of the new parapet and ramp, its relationship to the planes and massing of the church itself, and the detail of the lamp standard and its use as a modest landmark within the courtyard of Brompton Oratory were all thought to have been extremely well considered.



Commendation

**Designed by: Russell Taylor Architects,
85 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8HA**

Southern Kensington: From Landed Estates to Victorian Terraces Part II

The first part of this article, which appeared in the 2005 Annual Report, painted a picture of southern Kensington prior to 1851 and traced the area's rapid development over the next fifty years. In Part II the story of the great landowners and the rich, varied architectural styles they inspired is revealed.

Land ownership in southern Kensington is more complex than northern Kensington as several families owned estates of varying size and in less ordered blocks of land. We will concentrate on the largest estates, ones which have had the greatest impact on the development of southern Kensington, as we know it today.

The largest estate was the Edwardes Estate of some 250 acres which covered the area west of Earl's Court Road between the High Street and Old Brompton Road, with a smaller piece in the Lexham Gardens area. On the death in 1721 of the 4th Earl of Holland, who died childless, the estate passed to his aunt, Elizabeth Rich, wife of Francis Edwardes of Pembrokehire, and then to her son, Edward, who left the entailed estate to his brother, William. At this time over 190 acres was occupied by Earl's Court Farm, let to the Hutchins family. In 1776 William was created a baron and took the title Lord Kensington. He was succeeded in 1801 by his son, William. Unfortunately he was a profligate and in perpetual debt, a problem he tried to solve by leasing some of the estate for building. Luckily for his successors, the estate was entailed and therefore he could not touch the capital. He died in 1852 on a small house on the estate owing £270,000.

The 3rd Lord Kensington was marginally more successful, but it was only when his son, William, the 4th Lord Kensington, inherited the estate in 1872 that housing development began and fortunes improved. Between 1902 and 1903, the 6th Lord Kensington sold the area south of the Pembroke Road to Edward Guinness, Baron Iveagh, and the remainder in smaller blocks the following year.



Major General James Gunter

The Gunter Estate of some 100 acres was acquired piecemeal by members of the Gunter family between 1797 and 1866. The north portion ran from Old Brompton Road to Cromwell Road between Gloucester Road and Earl's Court Road; the southern part from Old Brompton Road to Fulham Road between The Boltons and Brompton Cemetery. The Gunters' wealth was founded on their celebrated confectionery business in Berkeley Square.

Reputedly it supplied all the grandest tables in the land with 'the ultimate perfection of the fashion of the day in cookery and the choicest accessories of the table'. Indeed, they contributed to Queen Victoria's wedding banquet, including the cake. The business continued until 1976.

Initially James Gunter purchased the land for market gardening which he ran very successfully. Robert, his son, inherited the life interest on the estate in 1819 and continued to accumulate more land including Earl's Court Lodge, the family home for the next sixty years. His main interest was running an innovative market garden business, and he is believed to have pioneered the first steam heated greenhouses. With the assistance of the architect George Godwin he initiated the development of The Boltons in 1850, rightly considered the jewel of the estate.

His son, Robert, inherited the entire of his grandfather's estate while his brother James inherited the portion accumulated by his father. The situation could have caused friction but the brothers were able to re-apportion the estate between them. Both brothers continued to purchase land but as neither were interested in market gardening, they began to seek other means of capitalising

on their land. They employed the same surveyors, George and Henry Godwin, and builders, most notably John Spicer in the northern part and Corbett and McClymont in the south. Between 1865 and 1895, on sixty acres they erected some 1500 houses, twelve mansion blocks, several churches and pubs.

The brothers shared the family home, Earl's Court Lodge, joined the Dragoon Guards together and fought in the Crimean War. After the war Robert moved to Wetherby Hall in Yorkshire, he became an MP and was created a baronet in 1901. James became a career soldier retiring as a Major General in 1887 and also settled in Yorkshire. The family continued to hold and develop the estate until 2002 when it was finally sold to an investment group.

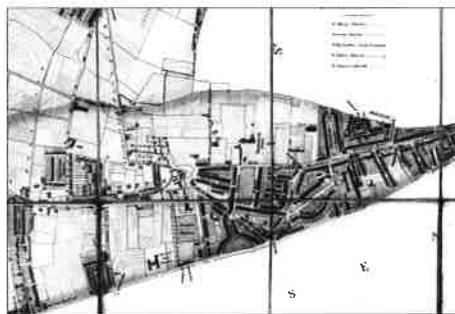
The 87 acres of the Harrington Villars estate roughly covers the Queen's Gate area and sits between the Gunter and Alexander estates. It is sometimes referred to as the Brompton Park and Hale House estate. An excellent account of the history of the estate by Rita Ensing can be found in the 1974/5 Kensington Society Annual Report. The land passed through several hands including those of Sir William Blake, William Methwold and Sir John Fleming, all of whom increased the size of the estate.

On Fleming's death the estate was shared by his two daughters: Seymour Dorothy, who married a Swiss and moved to Paris, owned the Villars portion, and Jane who married Charles Stanhope, 3rd Lord Harrington, owned the remainder. The Villars family sold their portion to the 1851 Commissioners. The 11th Earl of Harrington sold his portion, except 12 acres, in 1957.

Some of the finest architects and builders were employed such as C J Richardson, William Jackson and Charles Aldin. They were responsible for the magnificent houses on the west side of Queen's Gate, Queens Gate Terrace and Place, parts of Gloucester Road, Elvaston and Petersham Place. William Jackson and Charles Aldin built 463 houses between 1852 and 1871.

The Alexander or Thurloe Estate, comprising 54 acres in six lots, has an equally complex, often colourful history. A quick

synopsis of the facts helps to dispel the myth that Oliver Cromwell gave the estate to his spymaster, John Thurloe. As with the Harrington Estate the story starts with Sir William Blake. In addition to Hale House land (Queen's Gate and Cromwell Road junction area), Blake also owned several nurseries including Harrison's, around South Kensington and Attwood's, in the Gloucester Road station area. In 1760 Harris Thurloe Brace inherited the estate from his mother, Anna Maria Harris, a descendant of Sir William Blake, who married John Thurloe Brace, a grandson of John Thurloe in 1713. When Harris Brace died without a direct heir, he left the estate to John Alexander, a lawyer, who was related through Anna Maria's first marriage.



Section of the 1848 map of the Parish of Kensington showing the Alexander Estate

Henry Browne Alexander, Alexander's son, developed the estate over the next fifty years. Basevi and Bonin were the creators of the Alexander and Thurloe Square area. Thomas Cundy III, Charles Aldin and his sons, William Jackson, John Spicer, Ernest George and Peto, between 1851 and the 1880s constructed Queen's Gate Gardens, Ashburn Gardens, Place and Mews, Courtfield Road, 104-156 Gloucester Road (including Bailey's Hotel and St Stephen's Church), Southwall and Harrington Gardens.

Henry's son, William, is best known for the £80,000 he gave to pay for the National Portrait Gallery's present building and for the donation of family portraits including that of John Thurloe. A bachelor to the end, the estate passed to his cousin, Sybil, who was married to Lord George Campbell, son of the 8th Duke of Argyll. What now remains of the estate is held in trust by the Anstruther family.

The income for the Henry Smith (Kensington Estate) Charity,

founded by the will of Alderman Henry Smith, a prominent salter who died in 1627, came from the purchase by his trustees of some 70 acres in Brompton, mainly acquired from the Blake family. The irregular shaped plot stretched north of Fulham Road to south of Old Brompton Road and from Yeomans' Row to Evelyn Gardens. Initially it was set up to pay ransom for English sailors captured and enslaved by Barbary pirates and Henry Smith's poor relations. The trustees, as the supply of captives and poor kindred dwindled and profits increased, widened the aims of the charity, primarily into medical fields. The Board of Trustees was established in 1658 and recruited from the ranks of the aristocracy and landed gentry. Membership often passed from father to son.

In 1829 George Basevi was appointed architect and with the builders James Bonin and his sons began to transform the area. Their architectural legacy remains. Pelham and Egerton Crescents are rightly seen as amongst the best late Georgian developments in Kensington.



Sir Charles Freake, the 'Master Builder'

In 1845 Basevi fell to his death while working on Ely Cathedral and two years later the Bonins went bankrupt. This heralded the entrance of Sir Charles Freake, who worked on the estate from 1845 to 1884, and Cluttons, who took over as surveyors. Together they built some 330 large houses, 100 coach houses and stables and two churches. In 1995 the estate, valued at £282 million and producing an annual income of £11 million, was sold to the Wellcome Trust.

And so we have come full circle to the 1851 Commissioners Estate. By 1852 the Commissioners had purchased 87 acres of land in South Kensington with the assistance of parliament. They purchased all of the Villars Estate, parts of the Harrington Estate and exchanged plots with Alexander and Smith Charities. Their primary aim was to

set up colleges and schools to promote arts, culture and science, partially financed by building grand houses in the surrounding areas. Building started in Queen's Gate in 1855 and over 30 years 670 houses and 480 coach houses and stables were built. The Commissioners kept a tight control on the size, type and standard of their buildings. The names of the architects, surveyors and builders are now very familiar: C J Richardson, William Jackson, Charles Aldin and Sir Charles Freake. Some wealthy residents desired individually designed houses and employed their own architects such as Richard Norman Shaw.

Nowadays, given the importance of property and the building industry to our economy, one might well wonder how these grand developments were financed. Landowners released parcels of land on long leases at a set price per acre per annum to builders. Funds were then sought by a variety of means. Solicitors often arranged mortgages between builders and small investors looking for a modest return of 5%, sometimes they became investors themselves. Other developments were financed by financial institutions, for example Freake used insurance companies, The London County Bank developed the Abingdon/Scarsdale area and building and land societies were involved in smaller developments. As a last resort, builders had to take out short term loans at high interest rates.

All these complicated and often financially crippling arrangements had an effect on the builders and the building industry in general. The gains could be enormous and eight builders, mostly self made men, left personal fortunes of over £100k but equally bankruptcy was always just around the corner, a fate suffered by 30 firms. The peak was reached in London in 1875 followed by a sharp decline, which was particularly severe in southern Kensington. Prior to then 200 new buildings were erected every year from 1862 to 1878. By 1867 southern Kensington accounted for 10% of all building in London.

A variety of architectural styles prevail in southern Kensington. The early developments, including Brompton Square, Alexander Square and Edwardes Square, are excellent examples of late

Georgian architecture. They are very uniform with flat brick frontages and decorative ironwork.

Victorians turned against this style of architecture and in the words of Leigh Hunt found them 'unambitious and barrack like'. They preferred the more elaborate Italianate style and at its height South Kensington was said to rival the palazzi of Italy. Early Victorian houses, such as those in Thurloe Square and Hereford Gardens, were faced in stucco. White brick and stone or stucco was extensively used with more elaborate decorative features. Conservatories with curved glass roofs between the ground and first floors were often included.

Gradually front gardens disappeared and the façades became starker with Doric columned entrances. Garden squares were offered as compensation for the loss of individual gardens. Angular bays often two story high between porticoes became the norm in the 1860s as seen in Earl's Court Gardens and Cromwell Road. Height was also stressed by features such as crowning cornices and dressings on the second floor as seen in the Queen's Gate area. The interior arrangement had also changed, with three/four large rooms on the ground floor which covered the whole site leaving no room for garden space. The semi detached layouts popular in the 1840s and 50s now gave way to complete terraces. Although Victorians had rejected the uniformity of the Georgians, the terraces had similar layouts with either all doors to one side or mirrored, but builders were allowed a little more freedom with the façades.

Cornwall Gardens on the Broadwood Estate is perhaps a more interesting and innovative example of the Italianate style. The Broadwoods, owners of the celebrated piano making business in St James, used some of their profits to purchase a small plot in Kensington. In 1862 they employed Thomas Cundy III to design the layout which was composed of two parallel rows of Italianate stucco houses facing on to an ornamental garden planted with plane trees some of which survive to this day. Other special features included three water closets, white faced brick

and Portland cement and cast iron railings, which sadly were lost to the Second World War salvage drive.

By the 1870s this style fell out of favour especially with the more prosperous. The 'Domestic Revival' style based on English and Flemish vernacular tradition was now preferred and is best seen in the work of Richard Norman Shaw and Ernest George and Peto. Brick was central as it allowed more freedom and could withstand the London grime and soot from trains. Lowther Lodge, now the Royal Geographical Society, 196 Queen's Gate and 49 Princes Gate are good examples of Shaw's designs.

The twenty nine houses built by Harold Peto, son of Sir Samuel Peto, and Ernest George in Collingham Gardens and Harrington Gardens certainly stand out among the more nondescript speculative builds in the area. Described as Gothic revival they display a range of vernacular styles with extraordinary facades, Flemish gables, tall chimneys and leaded lights. Red brick and terracotta are the main building materials. Reactions were mixed, some finding them 'refreshing' others 'over extravagance' and 'of studied quaintness'.

Whatever architects, builders and their customers felt about the new architecture, the use of red brick was to prove a lasting



legacy. It was to play a key role in the final stage of the story: the arrival of the mansion block.

Initially Kensingtonians resisted the idea of living in flats as being 'too French' and 'ill-ordered and unhygienic' and the idea of mixing classes under one roof was viewed with horror. However there was pressure to provide accommodation for the better off commuter and with the rise in land values builders needed to find a more profitable way to provide homes, and mansion blocks proved to be the answer. By 1890s living in flats had become all the rage, especially with the installation of lifts. Albert Hall Mansions on the 1851 Commissioners' estate were the first to be constructed quickly followed by Kensington Court, Iverna Gardens, Wynnstay Gardens and Coleherne Court. These flats were given a new horizontal emphasis with architectural details and iron work balconies on the higher floors, two good-sized flats per floor, rooms with good proportions and high ceilings and, of course, accommodation for servants.

Have the grand aspirations of the estate owners withstood the test of time? South Kensington and Brompton have perhaps fared the best despite war damage and the efforts of the 'modernists'. The beautiful crescents and squares still stand; the great cultural and scientific institutes still attract thousands of visitors and have preserved their façades. Most of the new buildings such as the Ishmali Centre have blended successfully into their surroundings and battles have been won to prevent more controversial designs such as the Spiral (proposed for the V & A) becoming a reality. Vigilance is still the watchword in particular over the redevelopment of South Kensington Station. Sadly, however the further west one travels the changes are more intrusive: in the words of Charles Booth, the social reformer who lived at 6 Grenville Place, 'the tide of fashion and favour which for some time flowed towards Brompton exhausted itself in the wild west of Earl's Court.'

Carolyn Starren and Jennifer Kingsley

A Very Special Mayday

Thursday 1 May 2008 will be a special day for the congregation of St Philip's Church, situated in Earl's Court Road just north of its junction with Cromwell Road. Not only is that day the Feast of the Ascension this year, but it also marks the 150th anniversary of the consecration of the church by the Bishop of London.

To mark the occasion, a number of events are planned, starting with a service of celebration on 1 May presided by the Bishop of London, Richard Chartres. Other events include talks (see below) and a concert of light music by ConChordance on 10 May. The church will also be involved in the Earl's Court Festival (5 to 20 July) when it hopes to host choral evensong for the Festival as well as other concerts. Children's events include a service for the church school, St Barnabas and St Philip's, on 2 May (which this year is the Feast of St Philip), a summer picnic for families in Holland Park and a party for children of the parish in September.

For further information about any of these activities, check the church notice board or visit www.speccr.org.

The church, completed in 1858, was designed by the architect Thomas Johnson of Lichfield, father-in-law of the first vicar. It originally accommodated 1000 souls, but by the early 1860s the population of the parish had grown to around 8000 due to the rapid development of the area and the church was not nearly big enough. It was enlarged in 1862 so that a congregation of 1400 could be comfortably seated and, in 1869, part of the area was hived off to form the new parish of St Matthias.

The original building and the extension were funded personally by the vicar, the Rev J Dickson Claxton, with only a small proportion of the costs borne by local subscription.

With such a large congregation there were naturally a large



number of services, with both morning and evening prayer daily and no less than four services each Sunday.

The school was there from the beginning – in fact there were three schools maintained by St Barnabas and St Philip's churches, with a combined roll of over 600 children. Today there is just the one primary school but the church's links are stronger than ever. Apart from the celebratory Eucharist on 2 May, pupils are carrying out projects about the church's history including one imagining what the church might be like in another 150 years!

Although the church has seen changes in the past 150 years, much of the original fabric and fittings remain, including some attractive original stained glass at the higher level (bomb damage during the Second World War having destroyed some of the lower windows). The original organ was by Walker of Tottenham Court Road but this was replaced in 1962 by a model made by Noel Mander. The old organ was shipped to Poland and now resides with the Polish Baltic Philharmonie in Gdansk.

Modifications were made to the church both in 1978-82 and again in 2002-3. One interesting feature still present is a painted reredos by Walter Tapper (1912-13), as well as some original mosaic on a wall by the altar that was uncovered to everyone's surprise during the building works in 2002. The stained glass east window by Alfred Fisher of Whitefriars dates from 1966, and although the window was brought into the body of the church when the window opening was blocked during the most recent alterations, clever lighting means that it is still seen in its original glory.

Stephen Tatcher

A NOTE FOR YOUR DIARIES – Carrie Starren, a renowned local historian, will be giving a talk on St Philips and its parish. She will be joined by Carys Walsh (wife of St Philip's Associate Vicar David), who will talk about the lives of some of the ordinary parishioners. This will take place at 7.30 pm on Thursday 8 May at the church. Tickets £5 (to include a glass of wine) from Stephen Tatcher (07724075141) or on the door.

Planning in 2007

Over the last few years planning issues faced by The Kensington Society have become extremely challenging. There is a multitude of proposals put forward by the government and RBKC which we have supported, questioned or opposed. Last year I stated we faced challenging times, but I did not anticipate the level or the severity of the challenges. Without the unfailing support of Michael Bach we would not have been able to react as professionally as we have.

I am writing in early January, hence by the time of publication some of the information below may have been superseded.

Planning for a Sustainable Future

Despite overwhelming opposition from all quarters to their White Paper *Planning for a Sustainable Future*, the government now has a new planning bill before parliament and is consulting on a range of policies and radical proposals to reform the planning system.

The proposals threaten our power to influence the development of our built environment and the planning process. Though presented as promoting 'effective community engagement', they appear to limit our engagement in decisions that directly affect our lives. An outline of the proposals includes:

- Transferring all 'major' infrastructure decisions concerning roads, power stations and airports to an independent, unaccountable panel of government-selected 'experts'
- Limiting the rights of individuals and interest groups to be heard at public inquiries
- Easing the planning process for 'out-of-town' developments
- Introducing a 'presumption in favour of development'
- Expanding the definition of permitted development rights

The Kensington Society has written to our MP, Sir Malcolm Rifkind, to David Cameron and to the Council expressing our

deep concerns. We have also asked associated conservation and amenity societies to write expressing their concerns. We urge all Kensington Society members to lobby their MP about this Bill.

Local Development Framework

On 28 September 2007 the existing Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was amended to bring it in line with the Mayor of London's London Plan. Meanwhile, however, the Council is preparing a new-style plan, a Local Development Framework (LDF).

This will include several Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and a number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). The LDF, together with the Mayor of London's London Plan, will form the Royal Borough's Development Plan and will be the basis upon which all planning decisions are made.

The Planning Committee of the Society, particularly Michael Bach, has both participated and assisted in the formulation of many of the policies. Mr Prout, RBKC Director of Planning and Borough Development, and Councillor Daniel Moylan have opened the process to the public, an initiative this Society strongly endorses.

A major public consultation exercise will be undertaken in February/March to encourage public feedback on the proposed Core Strategy of the LDF and the associated Community Strategy.

Alterations to the Mayor's London Plan

After an examination in public of the Mayor's proposed alterations, the changes agreed by the panel will be adopted shortly. The Society supported the London Forum's representations, particularly those concerning density, where the Mayor supported, or even proposed, densities higher than those advocated in the London Plan.

GLA Act 2007: Mayor of London Order and GOL (Government Office for London) Circular: Strategic Planning in London.

The GLA Act 2007 gives the Mayor new planning powers to become the local planning authority for determining certain planning applications of strategic importance. The Act is due to come into force in April 2008.

In essence, the new powers would mean that if the Mayor decides a development would have a significant impact on the implementation of the Mayor's London Plan and a significant effect on more than one London borough, and has planning reasons for issuing the direction, the Mayor can take over the case and permit a development that the Royal Borough might wish to refuse.

If approved we fear:

- Local communities, residents, amenity groups and Councillors will lose existing powers to decide these cases
- Only one person will have the decision-making powers over our future townscape. This Mayor loves tall buildings
- There is the danger that wily developers will set their thresholds at a level to receive a potentially more favourable response from the Mayor than from RBKC
- The Mayor may take little account of our Local Development Plan - the Act enables the Mayor to put his priorities above all others

The Kensington Society has expressed its concerns to the Mayor, the government and RBKC and has participated fully in the consultation.

Adding Capacity at Heathrow Airport

In November the government issued a consultation paper *Adding Capacity at Heathrow Airport* to consider whether a third runway should be built served by an additional sixth terminal. This would enable the airport to handle around 700,000 flights a year. It is proposed to expand flights in and out of Heathrow airport by 50%. The new flight path would go over Holland Park and Kensington High Street.

London councils have reported to the government that they do not think a third runway at Heathrow is justifiable; that the economic arguments in favour of expansion at Heathrow have been overstated and the environmental impacts (particularly

related to climate change) understated. However, the government has initiated consultation. The Kensington Society has voiced its objections to the government, our MP and supports the Council's objections.

Warwick Road Amended Draft Planning Brief and master plan

The Society has called for a planning brief for Warwick Road for years. Finally in November 2007 the *Warwick Road Amended Draft Planning Brief* was issued for consultation. Michael Bach and I worked closely with RBKC's Planning and Development Department throughout the process. Though we are not pleased with the lack of a ceiling on densities appropriate for these sites, we are satisfied with the process and that, at last, there is a plan which will shape development and secure benefits for the area and its future community.

The Commonwealth Institute Draft Planning Brief

In August the Council published a Statement of Supplementary Planning Document Matters (SSP) entitled *The Commonwealth Institute Draft Planning Brief*. As with Warwick Road, we had expressed our concerns over the lack of such a brief and over the proposal to de-list the building. The brief outlined appropriate uses for the site, requiring the retention of the main tent-like structure.

The Planning Committee of the Society reviewed and commented throughout the process. We are pleased that the brief has been produced and with the quality of the report.

Exhibition Road

The Council continues with its ambitions for the make-over of Exhibition Road despite the refusal for lottery funding. The basic premise of the proposal is to create a space shared by vehicles and pedestrians, with high-quality paving and street furniture, better lighting, more trees and public art. The proposal would relocate the bus stops near the tube station and at a centralised location in Thurloe Place.

The Council has hosted several consultation meetings with amenity societies and residents' groups, including The Kensington Society.

Holland Park School

Last year was an active though unfruitful year for Holland Park School's building programme. In June the Council granted planning permission to demolish the school, rebuild it on a reduced site and sell the southern site for luxury housing. However, in July the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Hazel Blears, announced a public inquiry into the scheme. In November the Council announced it would withdraw the proposals from the public inquiry planned for February 2008.

We await a revised scheme which is likely to relocate affordable housing off-site but still propose the sale of the southern site.

The Society supports the Council's UDP policies for on-site affordable housing and opposes the sale of school grounds. We are, however, concerned that continual wrangling is not solving the needs of the pupils. The school's headmaster and teaching staff are excellent and students are progressing well. A decision to either refurbish and enhance (our preferred method) or rebuild must be made soon.

Other Major Developments

A major victory in July was persuading the Major Planning Development Committee to refuse the Tesco Tower, after an intensive six-month grass roots campaign. Unfortunately at the same meeting we lost our other long-running campaign against the demolition of De Vere Gardens to provide super-luxury housing. As expected the Tesco scheme has surfaced again with a new planning application for a building just as big and dense but not as high.

Subterranean Excavation

We continue our battle against deep excavation under houses and gardens with only minimal success. The long-awaited

Arup preliminary report on subterranean excavation has been received by the Council and we understand it is not what we had hoped. We look forward to the report being put in the public domain to generate an informed debate on this issue which has created great concern and uncertainty.

Inspectors and Appeals

The Society continues to support the Council with appeals against planning decisions. There have been some notable successes: the Earl's Court Casino, new illuminated advertisements with telephones attached and continual applications for increased signage on bus stops and for massive, American-style billboards along Westway have all been dismissed by the Inspectorate. However, the Inspector did not accept that planning permission is required for the multiple cameras for the Congestion Charge Zone.

Changes in RBKC's Planning and Development Department

We are pleased with the changes David Prout, the new Executive Director, has introduced. One of the most obvious ones is that applications before the Major Planning Committee now have a pre-meeting in which Committee members, local societies and concerned parties are invited



Amanda Frame at the AGM

to review the proposal. This was most effective in reviewing the Odeon and the De Vere Gardens applications. Another welcome change is the establishment of a Resident and Amenity Society Sounding Board, which meets bi-annually.

The government continues in its quest to control our lives, with new legislation, changes to existing regulations and new policy statements. We will never cease to ensure that your voice is heard and your needs addressed.

Amanda Frame, Chairman, Planning Committee

Appeal Decision: Subterranean Development

In April 2007, an appeal decision was made concerning a development application to create a basement under a listed building in Hounslow. The decision could have a bearing on the future direction of policy towards subterranean developments.

The appeal property lies in the Bedford Park Conservation Area which also lies, in part, in the Borough of Ealing. It is one of a pair of semi-detached houses built in the 1880s to a Norman Shaw design. The houses, some 350 of which are listed Grade II, were built without basements. The reason for the absence of basements is not known, but it is generally accepted that the lack of basements contributes to the special character of the buildings.

The owner-occupier applied for listed building consent and for planning permission to create a basement to increase the living area for his family. The Council refused permission on the grounds that the proposals would not be in keeping with the architectural and historic character of the pair of houses. The owner appealed against the Council's decision. The appeal was heard by a Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. The Inspector dismissed the appeal.

The Inspector gave due regard to national guidance on planning which, under PPG15, underlines the need to safeguard listed buildings from unsuitable alterations and to conserve or enhance the character of conservation areas. Reference was made to the London Plan policy 4B.11 and certain of the Borough of Hounslow's UDP 2003 policies that have similar effect. Reservations in the latter's policies about the creation of basements were afforded limited weight, as they were to be subject to further consultation. No applications for basements

in the Hounslow conservation area had been granted. Three applications in the Ealing area had been approved. However, views in Ealing were changing and the two councils were seeking a common approach. The Inspector's decision was based on the following arguments.

The appellant's plans included a new staircase to the basement beneath the existing one, and the creation of two light wells with metal grills above to bring light to the basement. The appellant argued that the grills would hardly be noticeable to neighbours. The Inspector agreed but found that the grills would be visually disturbing within the house itself, and that the stairway projection would reduce the sense of space in the hall. In other words, the character and architectural integrity of the house would be impaired.

The Inspector also considered the information submitted with the application to be inadequate. There was with insufficient regard to the structural integrity of the buildings, the risk of differential movement if one of the pair of houses was underpinned, the provision of drainage, ventilation and fire escape. All these matters were too fundamentally important to be omitted in the application submission.

The Inspector concluded that the effect of the proposals would be to detract, rather than to enhance, the character of the area and that this was contrary to national guidance and local planning policies. Furthermore, approval of the application would increase the pressure on the Council to approve further proposals that could weaken the special architectural character of the conservation area.

Charles Lutyens

Licensing in 2007

It comes as no surprise that because of the recent smoking ban patrons of pubs and bars are relocating outside to the forecourts, pavements and roadways, with all the entails of noise nuisance. This, when combined with the extended hours under the new licensing laws, has inevitably damaged the amenities of residents living in the immediate vicinity.

However it is not all bad news, as the licensing regime also gives those affected the right to apply for the licence to be reviewed by the Council on the basis that the operation of the individual premises works against one or more of the licensing objectives, e.g. noise from rowdy patrons disturbing local residents does not promote the 'the prevention of public nuisance' objective.

By way of example, The Hollywood Arms in SW10 has recently had its licence reviewed following complaints from neighbours. The Council received a petition from 38 local residents who complained that large, noisy crowds regularly congregated on the forecourt, pavement and road outside the premises – particularly in good weather. The residents also complained that on many occasions they could not sleep until the premises closed, after midnight, and that the voices of people drinking outside drowned out their own televisions.

The Council's Licensing Sub-Committee imposed tougher conditions on the pub after hearing evidence from residents, environmental health officers and the police. An environmental officer who visited a bedroom in a nearby home late at night reported that, with the windows open, the bedroom seemed as if it was inside the pub.

The new conditions include keeping the forecourt, pavement and roadway in the immediate vicinity of the premises clear of customers drinking or eating food after 9.30 pm. (The previous conditions only applied to the forecourt and only after 11.00 pm.) Another condition is for windows to be shut and locked after

9.30 pm until the premises closes. It is therefore clear that the Council will investigate complaints against licensed premises and is prepared to impose conditions to reduce disturbances to residents.

In a recent press release, the Council indicated that it is aware that the recent smoking ban may lead to an increase in noise from customers standing outside pubs and is monitoring the situation closely.

To conclude there are steps which residents can take to safeguard their quality of life. If residents experience problems with pubs, bars and restaurants in their vicinity, complaints should be made to the Council's Licensing Department and Noise Nuisance Team. Diaries should be kept so that this evidence can be referred to in their representations.

Anthony Lee



The Windsor Castle on Campden Hill Road in 1905

Casino Report 2007

The new Gambling Act 2005 came into force in September 2007. The Act allows 17 new casinos to be built including one regional super-casino. In July, the Casino Advisory Panel awarded the hotly contested super-casino site to Manchester causing outrage and controversy as Blackpool had been the leading contender. While the Commons backed the decision, the peers overturned it and Gordon Brown promised a review of the government's policy and the social effects of gambling.

The results of the review have recently been announced and the new provisions of the Act have come into force. Under the Act, the new regulator, the Gambling Commission, and local authorities have wide ranging powers to ensure gambling is conducted fairly, children and vulnerable people are protected and crime is prevented. All gaming operators will be required to show they can meet strict conditions to win an operating licence from the Gambling Commission, while the local authorities are responsible for allocating premises licences, to which they can attach conditions for the protection of children and vulnerable people. Casinos and betting websites are now able to advertise their services on TV and radio, the ads being subject to Ofcom rules including a 9.00 pm watershed. Despite the protections, many feel the Act normalizes an addictive activity.

While RBKC ruled itself out for consideration for a new casino under the new Act, nevertheless two applications for new casinos in the borough are under consideration having been grandfathered under the old regime. These are at the Earl's Court Exhibition Centre, where the proposed premises would occupy part of the basement, ground floor and first floor, and at 99-121 Kensington High Street, known as Derry and Tom's, with proposed access via Derry Street. The Earl's Court application was refused by the Council in June 2006 following which the developer appealed to the Secretary of State. The Planning Inspector dismissed the appeal in January 2008 on the grounds

of its size and detrimental effect on the lives of local people. In his report, Roger Brown warned that traffic caused by the casino could have caused 'unacceptable noise and disturbance for neighbours'. The developer could still appeal to the High Court on points of law, and the case is held in abeyance pending the developer's decision. The Derry and Tom's application has not been heard by the Council and has been adjourned *sine die*. Meanwhile, existing casinos in the borough, such as Cromwell Mint Casino, Maxims, Connoisseur Club and Grosvenor Casinos have had their licences renewed.

Charles Lutyens

Further information

Licensing Team
Council Offices
37 Pembroke Road
London W8 6PW

Tel: 020 7341 5152 (General Enquiries)

Email: licensing@rbkc.gov.uk

[www.rbkc.gov.uk/Environmental Services/Licensing](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/Environmental%20Services/Licensing)



Barker's Tea Room and terrace garden in the 1920s

Hidden Garden Squares of Notting Hill

Standing on the crest of Ladbroke Grove, the spire of St John's Church (1847) marks the apex of the remarkable series of sixteen communal gardens wrapped concentrically around the slopes of Notting Hill. Between stucco crescents and terraces, the gardens with their shrubbery, trees and grass can be glimpsed through gaps; inside, the fortunate residents can walk directly from their houses, often through a small back garden, into a shared and secluded green space.

Imagine a family in the 1850s, installed in their newly built house in 'Kensington Park'. Perhaps the father would be a city merchant, or a retired admiral, attracted by the open prospect to the west across the fields to the distant hills of Harrow and Uxbridge. Certainly he would have chosen his house, then as much as now, for its verdurous setting so near the centre of the metropolis.

Comparing the gardens as they are now with the early plans, some from the 1840s, but mostly from the very clear Ordnance Survey set of 1867 recording all the large trees and groups of shrubs, it is striking how each garden has evolved with a different character, in spite of similar layouts at the beginning. Indeed, what the plans do not convey is the fact that nearly all are on a slope, and in some the curve of the hill conceals the end.

Their style can be considered a revived form of the 'picturesque', popular in architecture at that date for 'rural Italian' villas, and stemming from Repton's way of setting a country house on its own flower-garden terrace, as a foreground leading to the broader landscape of the park. Here in the Ladbroke Estate it is scaled down and double-sided, so that the shared pleasure-ground is enclosed between two parallel streets. (Ladbroke Square, by far the largest, is an exception, with roads on three sides.)

The original concept of shared gardens without intervening roads may derive from the never completed Eyre Estate in St John's Wood, with a 1794 plan for a 'Grand Circus' in which pairs of semi-detached villas share a communal garden. Nearer in time and place is the 'Tyburnia' district of Bayswater where from 1825 onwards the architect Samuel Pepys Cockerell and his successors laid out a leafy area of stucco terraces, backing directly on to a shared garden.

The initial plan for the Ladbroke Estate appears in a drawing of 1823. Its author, Thomas Allason (1790-1852), was an architect living nearby in Linden Gardens, who had worked as a landscape designer for the 15th Earl of Shrewsbury at Alton Towers. Allason had travelled in Italy and Greece, and was surveyor to James Weller Ladbroke (d. 1847), a Sussex landowner from a banking family, who inherited 300 acres of farmland north of the Uxbridge Road (now Holland Park Avenue). Allason's plan shows a 'circus', a large ring of buildings bisected by a large straight road on the line of the future Ladbroke Grove, itself lined with buildings, so that there are two semi-circular green spaces entitled 'paddocks', completely hidden from the street, with a third triangular space, towards the present Notting Hill Gate.

Of Allason's original scheme little was built except for some houses near the Uxbridge Road, the southern end of Ladbroke Grove and Ladbroke Terrace. Speculative building in London became unprofitable after the financial crash of 1825, so that a new venture was tried on James Weller Ladbroke's estate. This was a racecourse, known as the 'Hippodrome', for steeplechases, with facilities for cricket and archery. For various reasons this was not a success; it opened in 1837 and closed after only four years.

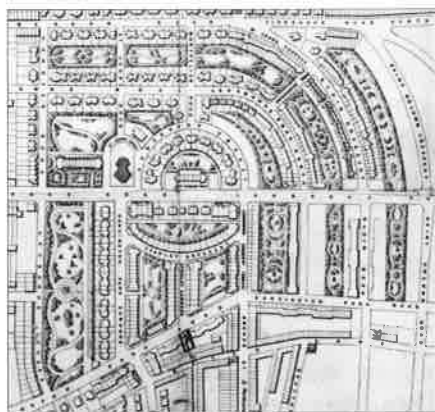
So building development was ventured again, and very probably the distinguished architect J B Papworth (1775-1847) was involved. Like Allason he had worked at Alton Towers, but also in Cheltenham, where there are some of the same place names, e.g. Lansdown(e) and Montpellier. Papworth's pupil

James Thomson (1800-1883) certainly designed some of the houses on the Ladbroke Estate, and also a layout plan of 1842, in which communal gardens are shown, although not as actually built. Houses by Thomson and another associate of Papworth, Robert Cantwell, make a relatively simple backdrop to the earlier gardens, brick as much as stucco.

From the beginning the garden squares were seen as an integral part and selling point of the estate. Thomas Allason appears to have designed Ladbroke Square Garden; a plan of 1849 with his signature shows the paths and grouping of trees and shrubs exactly as they are now; but the background row of mansions in Kensington Park Gardens is drawn to two alternative designs. After James Weller Ladbroke's death in 1847, his cousin Felix Ladbroke inherited the estate which he started to split up among several speculators, with varying fortunes.

The most successful of these, C H Blake, following Allason's death in 1852, employed the topographical artist, illustrator and architect Thomas Allom (1804-1872). Contemporaries criticised him for his picturesque designs, generally set off by foliage, which they said would not work as buildings. However, given a free rein on the Ladbroke Estate, he proved them wrong;

he designed over a hundred houses still standing today and much sought after, with the help of his chief builder/developer, David Allan Ramsay, who had been a nurseryman and garden designer. Allom's style was theatrical, Italianate, almost baroque, sometimes very grand, as in Kensington Park Gardens, with dramatic curves, and contrasts of light and shade, creating



Plan of the Kensington Park Estate
c.1850 showing the garden squares

vistas to focal points such as St Peter's church (1856) with its campanile. The street fronts are unrestrained, the garden fronts even more so, as in Stanley Gardens South, where bows and bays make an exuberant and ornamental backdrop to the trees and shrubs.

Allom's engraved view of Kensington Park Gardens in 1853 shows the same buildings we see today and in some of the gardens an 1850s family would feel little had changed, except for the trees, now splendidly mature if they have survived. But it is impossible to 'freeze' a garden. Despite changes and reflecting tides of fashion, they are all still beautiful. The peripheral path survives in all; often lost are the inner paths, shown in the original plans, generally in bold circles or teardrop patterns, allowing for figure-of-eight walks (to meet the neighbours or not as desired). Sometimes the paths, surfaced in hoggins or golden gravel, and edged with rope tiles, led to a small circle in the centre, around a feature such as a rose bed, a weeping tree, a group of evergreens, or a fountain as in Ladbroke Square.

There were always lawns; in Thomas Allason's original concept of 1823 the word 'paddocks' conjures up an attractive New Forest-like picture of horses and cows among the buildings. But by the 1840s, when building started, the lawnmower had been invented, and the garden plans clearly show shrubberies, not grazing. Nearby there were plenty of stables; on the Ladbroke Estate communal gardens occupied the place of the mews. Later, in 1864, the Metropolitan railway made the area accessible from the City.

Each garden was given a strong framework, not only by the enclosing buildings, but also by the boundaries of the private back gardens. There were cast-iron railings or balustrades while the semi-circle of Lansdowne Crescent has handsome rendered piers. Another unifying factor was the sweep of evergreen shrubs around the edge, which acted as an enclosing rim and gave a degree of privacy to the back gardens. Very often trees of one species, ash or beech, were planted in these peripheral zones

outside the railings, screening the backs of the houses from each other. Inside the garden the trees were grouped together and shrubs planted densely to emphasise the intersections of the paths, creating the desired contrast of light and shade.

As the neighbourhood slipped downhill socially (literally some modern householders would add) especially on the northern flank of the hill - Elgin Crescent being the frontier of respectability - the gardens tended to be simplified; paths were taken out, and shrub beds grassed over. World War II hastened this process; gardeners were scarce; part of Arundel/Elgin was dug up for vegetables; there was an air raid shelter under Arundel/Ladbroke and a barrage balloon in Ladbroke Square. In Elgin Crescent 'unauthorised persons' used the garden as a dumping ground, gaining access through premises demolished by bombing. The background to the gardens deteriorated as houses were rebuilt in unsympathetic styles, sometimes as blocks of flats in harsh red brick.

A 1949 Council report however describes many of the gardens as being well cared for by the residents, and there were still many prosperous families in the area. In the mid 1960s fashionable people started to move in, attracted by the gardens and their



Stanley Gardens South in 2008 showing ornate backs of the Allom houses

wonderful advantages for children, who could play and make friends without crossing any roads. The communal gardens encouraged a 'village green' atmosphere with summer and bonfire parties. A hard tennis court was constructed in Ladbroke Square where Roy Jenkins and Anthony Crosland would play. Dilapidated letting-houses were taken over and done up by single families; stucco started to gleam again and the gardens became more polished with the influx of money for new planting.

Unfortunately prosperity has brought new dangers as well, not only in the form of side extensions blocking light to the gardens, but also by over-conspicuous conservatories, incongruous brick boundary walls or wooden fences, instead of cast-iron railings and balustrades. Excavations for swimming-pools threaten mature trees as well as adjacent houses. Notting Hill, having been a place where poor immigrants, students, writers, artists and musicians could afford to live, has now become a status symbol home for the very rich. This may be partly due to the eponymous film and the lively Portobello Road nearby, but surely also to the secret gardens. In a short article it is impossible to describe their variety.

As an example of early Victorian town planning they are unique; there were other garden suburbs of that date, and other isolated garden squares with direct access from private gardens. But there is nowhere else which realises these two concepts on such a grand scale and with such success.

Henrietta Phipps

Editor's note: Henrietta Phipps is the Hon. Secretary of Ladbroke Square Garden Committee. The above essay is adapted from an article written previously for the Ladbroke Association Newsletter.

**Some of the communal gardens are open to the public on Open Garden Squares
Weekend, June 7/8 2008
for more information,
see www.opensquares.org.**

The North Kensington Environment Project News and Views

Pupils tending the vegetable garden at the Pupil Referral Unit

'Green fingers' certificates were awarded to the most committed pupils, and The Kensington Society presented Carol Klein's *How to Grow Your Own Veg* to the school library. The pupils decided to make Christmas wreaths and bird boxes, and have finished planning for next season's crops.



The new light installation under Westway besides St Mark's Road

The floor consists of granulated recycled glass surrounded by wooden sleepers and railings. At night parallel lines of red and white lights mimic the light trails from the cars on Westway. Local residents are pleased with this improvement to a previously litter strewn derelict plot.



The Westway Project's completed scheme for the bridge across Ladbrooke Grove



A visible eyesore has been transformed. The underside of the bridge has been painted and the walls covered with corrugated anti-graffiti art panels, following the precedent set by the successful improvements to the Portobello Road Bridge.

New planting in the pocket park at the west end of Kensal Road



A previously neglected open space, which suffered from fly tipping and was being invaded by Japanese Knot Weed, now provides within perimeter railings seats in an attractive area which has been praised and welcomed by the local community.

Celia Rees-Jenkins

The Kensington Society School Prizes 2007

In 2004 the Kensington Society introduced an annual competition in memory of its first Hon. Secretary, Mrs Gay Christiansen. The competition is open to pupils attending any secondary school, state or independent, situated in the former Royal Borough of Kensington. The purpose of the competition is to encourage interest in and knowledge of the architecture, environment, history, art and literature of Kensington. The entries are judged by an independent panel of three led by the Head of School Improvement for the Royal Borough.

Careful readers of the Report may have noted that this is not the first time the Society has awarded school prizes. In Dr. Rushworth's article on Holland Park School he notes prizes for essays about Kensington first awarded in 1959 (see page 12).

This year the Society offered first prizes of £200 and second prizes of £100, to pupils aged 11-13 (Years 7 and 8) and 14-15 (Year 10) during the school year 2006-7. The theme focused on Kensington Palace. The Palace is anxious to encourage more people, especially young people, to visit. Pupils were asked to design a special promotional leaflet which they felt would serve this purpose. In conjunction with Kensington Palace entrants were offered a free visit to the Palace to carry out their research. This proved to be a popular topic and over 200 pupils submitted entries!

No awards were made in the Year 10 category since the judges considered that the entries were not of qualifying standard. However, those in Years 7 and 8 produced several original and innovative winning entries as can be seen from the collage on page 60.

The Prize Winners in Year 7 and 8 were:

First Prize of £200

(shared between three, each pupil receiving £70)

Amachi Osanipe, Cardinal Vaughan School

Anais Richmond, Lycée Français

Sharda Rozana Gregory, Holland Park School

Second Prize of £100

(shared between three, each receiving £35)

Christian Sahakian, Cardinal Vaughan School

Danille Tate, Holland Park School

Tomek Maikow, Cardinal Vaughan School

All the winners were invited to the AGM and HRH The Duke of Gloucester graciously agreed to present them with their prizes.

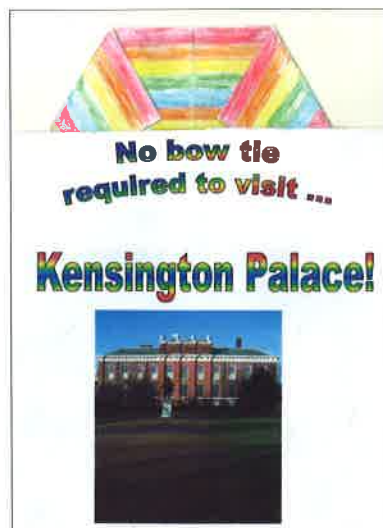
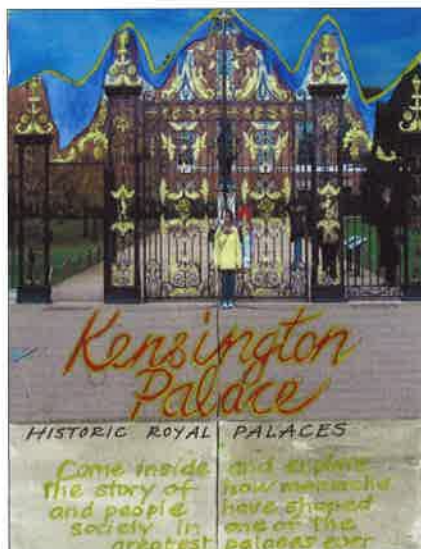
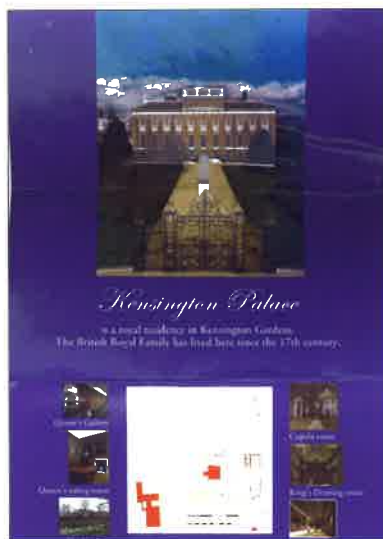


HRH The Duke of Gloucester
presenting the prizes



The prize winners at the AGM

Some Prize Winning Entries



What's New on and about Kensington?

INTERNET SITES

Launch of new interactive website for Leighton House Museum

www.rbkc.gov.uk/leightonmiddleeast

Leighton House Museum has recently created a website which explains the links between the Victorian painter Frederic Leighton, his sumptuous home in Kensington and the Middle East. An intrepid traveller, Leighton undertook extensive journeys to Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Turkey and Syria from the late 1850s up until his death in 1896. These travels inspired the construction of the Arab Hall (1877) at his home, a museum since 1900. The new website not only allows you a preview of the interiors before you visit but has state of the art technology that gives background information on the Middle Eastern objects at the house. In conjunction with the stunning visual representations of the interiors, visitors to the website can also explore a section



that illustrates and describes all known paintings and drawings done by Leighton on the theme of the Orient. In addition, a series of short essays help to contextualise Leighton's interest in this part of the world against the bigger backdrop of relations between East and West at the end of the nineteenth century. A notable feature of the website is its interlocking of the fields of art, culture and politics and the highlighting of stories previously untold. The website celebrates the importance and influence that the Middle East and Asia played in the career of this great British artist.

BOOKS

***Notting Hill* by Derry Moore**

Acclaimed photographer and long-term resident Derry Moore explores Notting Hill's unique appeal in words and pictures, telling its story from its beginnings to its current incarnation as one of the most varied, cosmopolitan and fashionable of London neighbourhoods. The book is illustrated by stunning colour photographs of Notting Hill.

Francis Lincoln Limited, 2007 ISBN -10 071122739X Price £14.99

***Notting Hill Behind the Scenes* by Hermione Cameron**

This compendium of early 20th century postcards is laid out geographically, leading the reader from the original Notting Hill Gate tube station down to Lancaster Road via all the famous routes. What makes this book stand out from others in the genre is the focus on the individuals who lived and worked in the area.

BehindTheScenesPublishing.Com, ISBN 0955665906 Price £12.99

Both books are available in local bookshops and from the Central Library

NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY

Between the Lines

Between the Lines is an exciting new lottery funded project

based at the Central Library which will run from May 2007 to March 2008 and led by writer-in-residence, Vanessa Walters. Between the Lines creatively investigates African and Caribbean histories in Kensington and Chelsea. Features include new writing, exhibitions, workshops and a book club, full details can be found at www.rbkc.gov.uk/vmbt. Vanessa hopes to explore black presence in the area prior to the arrival in 1848 of the *Windrush* in Tilbury from the Caribbean. Although evidence is scant and difficult to find, they have already discovered the 1597 baptism in Chelsea of a Guyanese Native American brought to England by Sir Walter Raleigh.

Central Library

Initial designs for a major refurbishment of the Central Library have been submitted. They show the library space double in size and equipped with completely updated facilities. Local residents are asked to share their views on library services and facilities by completing the 'library refurbishment project survey' which can be at www.rbkc.gov.uk/libraries/general_survey. Further information is available both from the website and from the Library.

Carolyn Starren



The Tabernacle Arts Centre in Powis Square

The Kensington Society and the RBKC Commission on Retail Conservation

A vibrant high street is about a lively mix of equally necessary multiples and independents. The march of the clones brings increased homogenisation of our retail areas, boring uniformity, decreasing independents and less variety of retail offerings. We are all losing our sense of place and living community.

The Kensington Society was therefore delighted when the Leader of the Council, Cllr. Merrick Cockell, invited its Chairman to represent residents on the Commission on Retail Conservation. Other members included Cllr. Tim Ahern (Chairman), Sir Terence Conran, Peter Simon (Monsoon and Accessorize) and Andrew Ashenden (Howard de Walden Estates).

In their mid-2007 report, the Commissioners did not hesitate to be radical. Of its 54 recommendations the Council has subsequently accepted 45. These include recommendations to the government to place small shops (as re-defined by the Commission), coffee shops and internet cafes in a Use Class of their own, to amend legislation to require planning permission for mergers of ground floor units, and much else to support small retailers so essential to communities. Local recommendations include a determined focus on retail needs in the incoming Local Development Plan (LDF), introducing 30-minute parking meters in shopping areas and funding a full-time 'champion' Council post for shopping areas. The Council especially recognised the need for a town centre champion for Portobello Road and its market.

These and many other detailed recommendations have excited much press and local authority interest throughout the UK and, as the Commissioners and Council intended, serve as a model to maintain and enhance the character, diversity and individuality of the Royal Borough's high streets and of high streets. The Council has scored a bull's-eye; and The Kensington Society is pleased to be associated with this major concern.

Robin Price

Reports from Local Societies 2007

Editor's note

Many thanks to all those who have contributed this year; the inclusion of illustrations sent in by societies has greatly enhanced this section. The reports show the vital role local associations play in maintaining the special character of Kensington and in fostering a strong sense of community.

We hope in future to receive reports from some of our other hard working affiliated societies. These include: Cromwell Road Association, Eardley Crescent Association, Earl's Court Gardens Residents' Association, Kensington Square Residents' Association, Lexham Gardens Residents' Association, Marlborough Court Residents' Association and Royal Crescent Association.

The Boltons Association

The Boltons Association is continuing its drive to put additional emphasis on quality of life issues, as well as planning and conservation ones. This has entailed a renewed focus on licencing/restaurants/clubs etc, particularly in The Beach area of the Fulham Road.

There is also an initiative to revive the 'Fulham Road meetings' which took place some years ago - these provided a forum for residents and local traders to discuss issues such as shop fronts, public order and licensing hours. The meetings were generally felt to be very useful but stopped after the Council withdrew from organising them. We are hopeful that a new series of meetings may be arranged - and will discuss the matter with the Council in the near future.

In planning terms, much activity continues. There are numerous subterranean developments - with under-garden swimming pools, together with cinemas and gymnasiums. At least one neighbour living next door to such a development has complained about subsequent subsidence and cracks in walls etc. In The Boltons

itself a number of major projections are nearing completion, with the Little Boltons and Tregunter Road seeing most of the new, big developments.

Calvin Jackson, Planning Controller

Brompton Association

The early part of the year was dominated by the revised planning application for St Paul's, Onslow Square. The first application was withdrawn following massive objection the previous year. The second scheme, also designed by Foster and Partners, was not substantially different. As before, it involved transforming this attractive Victorian church into a fully fledged conference centre for large numbers of people with a contemporary facilities building linked at three levels to the church. The new building would replace the Victorian church hall (which sits so well with the church itself and its Victorian neighbour, the former Brompton Hospital and its delightful Grade II* listed chapel), and the modern vicarage.

Holy Trinity Brompton (HTB), the promoters of the scheme, assembled a powerful team of consultants in an effort to persuade local people and the Borough that the scheme would have a minimal impact on Onslow Square. However, it was evident from the drawings that the proposals represented a very significant intensification of use in this otherwise wholly residential square. Also, the listed Victorian church would be gutted in the process and fitted with a new interior. The Borough, which received vast numbers of representations, shared our concerns about the impact of the proposals on Onslow Square as a neighbourhood and on the impact on the fabric of the listed building. In the event HTB withdrew their planning application in early March.

St Paul's has now been refurbished and re-opened for worship in September. Proposals to alter the interior are however - somewhat worryingly - proceeding under the Ecclesiastical Exemption. A Faculty Application has recently been submitted to remove the fine organ case, one of the few designed by the great Victorian architect J F Bentley.

Concern about the closure of local amenity shops in and around South Kensington continued as did pressure for shops in retail use (A1) to become restaurants (A3). In addition, the Association has been working with other local groups to encourage the Natural History Museum to adopt a more appropriate and sensitive strategy for the use of its gardens. The gardens surrounding the museum are an integral part of Alfred Waterhouse's magnificent design and yet they spend much of the year buried under temporary structures - London Fashion Week in particular - which look ugly, compromise the setting of one of the finest Victorian buildings in the country, generate considerable noise and nuisance for local residents and prevent the public enjoying the open green space. Even after the temporary structures are removed the public is denied access because all the grass (i.e. turf) has to be completely replaced and is thus fenced off.

Lastly, while the Borough continues to trumpet its plans for Exhibition Road, the Association is not wholly persuaded by the merits of this expensive and over promoted scheme. Westminster City Council does not seem to be participating, so that the new "shared surface" with cars mixing with pedestrians will now just be installed between South Kensington Station and the museums. The original scheme envisaged a new kind of route all the way to Hyde Park. Since the brief has changed, we think the design solution should be reviewed accordingly. More important, in our view, than creating new and expensive paving patterns in Exhibition Road is the vital need to improve the safety and amenity of pedestrians around South Kensington tube station. The pavements need to be widened. It is as simple as that and it is long overdue. The fancy plans for Exhibition Road are a distraction. The urban realm around the station could be readily improved. This is where good design is needed and public money should now be spent.

Sophie Blain, Chairman



Congestion in Thurloe Place



Campden Hill Residents' Association (CHRA)

Once again RBKC's plans to demolish and re-build Holland Park School have dominated our activities for 2007. Considerable effort was put into presenting our case to the Council's Major Planning Committee who, despite major weaknesses in the applicant's case, approved the plan to re-build the school with the major part of the financing coming from the sale of the school playing field on the southern part of the site. The Cabinet duly endorsed this decision. Fortunately the Government Office for London decided there were major issues that required independent review.

The Council's plans were 'called in' and a date was set for an independent inquiry which was to be held on the 5 February 2008. However, RBKC withdrew its application and the public inquiry was cancelled.

RBKC has made it clear that they intend to slightly modify their existing scheme and resubmit their planning application for approval in the spring of 2008. CHRA is concerned that this is an unworkable timetable which will not allow stakeholders (parents, residents, statutory and non-statutory consultees) sufficient time to be consulted on the revised planning application. We raised our concerns in an open letter to Merrick Cockell, Leader of the Council. The letter is on our website at www.chra.info.

We hope that following proper consultation with all stakeholders that the Council will be persuaded that there is a better way forward. This would be to keep the school playing field for a state of the art sports facility and remodel the school on its existing footprint using government funding for which the Council has been ear-marked in 2009.

The Association continues to take an active role in policing, local community matters and other planning issues; and of course our annual summer party. We are most grateful to the committee of Campden Hill Square in allowing us to hold this most enjoyable event in an exceptionally attractive location. Music was again

provided by the Portobello Stompers and we were pleased to welcome Sir Malcolm Rifkind as our Guest of Honour. We also appreciated the help given with catering by senior students from Holland Park School.

David White, Chairman

Earl's Court Square Residents' Association

We are pleased to report a particularly successful aspect of a recent programme of external works at 1-12 Richmond Mansions, 248 Old Brompton Road. It concerns the restoration of the original Victorian style balcony railings to the front elevation.

Alan Smith, from managing agents AGS Services (UK) Ltd., explains: 'When we took over management of this block a few years ago, one of our goals was to have railings reinstated. The new railings were copied from the neighbouring building and were manufactured in Poland. Apparently the original balconies were damaged during bombing in the Second World War and the railings were replaced at that time by rather ugly mis-matched brickwork. Perhaps they were melted down and used to make Spitfires! That was the myth at the time. Now, 60 years later, we are back to the original style. We are grateful to the Royal Borough for a conservation grant towards the cost of these works.'



Christine Powell, Chairman

Edwardes Square Scarsdale and Abingdon Association (ESSA)

In conjunction with the Kensington Society, ESSA objected to the misinformation in the January 2007 RBKC officer's report on the 'Tesco Tower' application. As a result, David Prout, Executive Director of Planning and Borough Development commissioned a new, independent report and the whole application was reconsidered. ESSA made representations at this hearing on behalf of the neighbouring Conservation Areas. The application was refused. Another application is likely to be submitted soon. ESSA has had a preliminary meeting with the developers. It remains to be seen whether they take account of our concerns. We will continue to support the existing Tesco site residents and the interests of the adjoining Conservation Areas.

We have had a busy year with other developments, notably the Kensington Odeon. Unlike Tesco, the Odeon developers were assiduous in their consultation with residents and listened to their concerns. After eighteen months of negotiations the majority of residents' concerns were resolved. We welcomed the decision to retain the cinema frontage and though unhappy that the existing trees cannot be preserved, we are reassured by the measures agreed to allow replacement trees to fully mature.

This year saw a spate of applications for sub-basement development. Some have been granted. ESSA has no objection where the character of the building will not be affected and where such development will not harm neighbouring properties. However, we believe that there are very few properties in our Conservation Area which fulfil these criteria. We are greatly concerned that the cumulative effect of such developments will damage the area.

ESSA is also actively involved with the proposals to redevelop the Commonwealth Institute and the north part of Warwick Road. Heathrow expansion plans and licensing issues are keeping us busy on behalf of our residents.

Suzy Anderson, Hon. Secretary

Kensington Court Residents Association

We continue to have problems at the north and south ends of our small area.

North is the passageway from Kensington Court to Kensington High Street, used by many residents and other pedestrians. It threatens to become too crowded with tables and chairs from three premises, and probably a fourth to come on the corner. It is particularly subject to noise nuisance as it is a canyon-like passage which acts like an echo chamber. We need some 'joined-up government' by the Council to deal with the various aspects involved – planning, licensing, highways, environmental health, street drinking.

To the south we have a pub which has been rowdy in past years, now much improved, but given an additional problem by the no-smoking rules which force smokers on to the pavements and roadway to continue eating and drinking.

We have urged the Council to adopt measures to stop street-drinking but they have so far proved to be inhibited by the risk of losing appeals. Westminster, Hammersmith and Fulham and other councils have acted to cope with this problem. It should be possible to assess the risks and, if not serious, go ahead.

We should be very glad of the support of other local groups in pressing for this action against street-dinking – the government's stated objective.

Sir Ronald Arculus, Chairman

Ladbroke Association

The highlight of the year was our photographic exhibition. In 2005 the Association commissioned the photographer Thomas Erskine to photograph the fronts of every building within the Ladbroke Conservation Area. In October an exhibition of this photography was held in the 20th Century Theatre in Westbourne Grove. Eighteen large panoramas were shown together with photographs of some of the more interesting buildings. The exhibition was sponsored by Savills and Jereboams. It was held

in conjunction with the St Peter's Church Kensington Park Road Appeal Committee, who produced an interesting exhibition of photography of this important church.

The first evening's viewing on 16 October was attended by about 150 people. David Prout, Executive Director of Planning and

THE HOUSES OF NOTTING HILL



COMMISSIONED BY THE LADBROKE ASSOCIATION

PHOTOGRAPHS BY THOMAS ERSKINE

WWW.LADBROKEASSOCIATION.ORG.UK

PRINTING BY FLASH PHOTODIGITAL

Borough Development, gave an interesting opening address about the history of the Ladbroke Estate. About 200 people visited the exhibition on the following day, and it attracted many favourable comments.

The poster, illustrated on page 73, showing some of the street panoramas proved particularly popular. Copies of the poster can be ordered from www.ladbrokeassociation.org.uk.

Many of the photographs will eventually be on our website to illustrate a series of pages on every street in the Ladbroke Area. We hope to donate a copy of the database of photographs to the RBKC so the public may have access to it.

The number and complexity of planning applications within the area has grown. The most controversial and disruptive ones relate to underground developments, usually to accommodate gyms or swimming pools. The Association is concerned about the cumulative and long term effects of these developments.

A particular concern in 2007 has been the proposal to build nine new houses in the northern slice of the old LEB site in Victoria Gardens. The houses are not only far too big for the area but are being built on the wrong part of the site. Building as proposed will seriously prejudice the urgently needed redevelopment of the northern side of Notting Hill Gate, which consists of sadly outdated, ugly and uneconomic buildings. The Association looks forward to putting forward its views to the recently announced study into the preparation of a master plan for the redevelopment of Notting Hill Gate.

The Association welcomes the recent involvement of conservation bodies in consultation on government proposals to change the rules for permitted development and appeals. We also appreciate David Prout's initiative in setting up the Sounding Board meetings to allow the Association and similar bodies to meet regularly to discuss matters of common interest.

David Corsellis, Chairman

Norland Conservation Association

This time last year we seemed to be under siege, and on a losing wicket:

- We became aware of the full implications of the House of Lords decision regarding the Shimizu case which diminished the ability of local authorities to preserve the character and appearance of conservation areas
- Subterranean developments
- Planning officers seemed increasingly inconsistent when advising applicants about UDP policies in guiding applicants, and deciding whether or not to recommend applications for approval
- The Government had issued two consultation papers on permitted development, which apparently paid homage to Conservation Areas as being different, but then spelt out proposed policies which seemed to lift the lid on all kinds of demolition and development without actually proposing different treatment for Conservation Areas
- The West London Tram was still threatened by the London Mayor
- The Westfield Retail Development at White City continued to cause considerable anxiety.

And then, on July 21, a large number of houses in Norland were seriously flooded - many by a reverse surge in the sewers, with extremely unpleasant consequences for the owners.

As always, barely a week goes by when we are not brought up short with the realisation of the importance of a local conservation society like ours (as well of course as The Kensington Society, whose guidance we all greatly appreciate).

Some of these concerns have gone away:

- The government has more or less accepted all the points we made on permitted development. It really does look as if Conservation Areas will be treated differently, and

local councils will have increased powers to make Article 4 directions

- The West London Tram really does appear to have been superseded by CrossRail (though we remain on our guard).

Unfortunately other concerns have not disappeared, such as those regarding the Westfield White City development, subterranean developments, and particularly the need for all of us to 'stiffen' the planning officers in dealing with planning applications, and ensure UDP policies stick.

To this end, we are undertaking a new initiative with the Conservation and Design Team Leader at RBKC, to make a number of Article 4 Directions to protect particularly vulnerable street scenes. We have made a survey of the whole area, and agreed priorities. Now we have to make it happen!

Clive Wilson, Acting Chairman

Onslow Neighbourhood Association (ONA)

As I write, a house owner close by in Pelham Street is radically reconfiguring a modest property. This involves intermittent use of metal cutting machinery that emits ear-piercing screeches. The owner is within his rights and adheres to the permitted working hours but the extent to which some houses are being rebuilt in the borough often causes ill feeling amongst neighbours. Work can go on for years.

This is particularly the case with subterranean development, where the effects on neighbouring properties may not become apparent for some considerable time. Equally, the creation of new underground rooms or garages may remove natural soak away areas of gardens and other land, adding to the problems of flooding. The Council tells us that there is little legislation enabling them to restrict subterranean development and for that reason we would support a presumption against it, on the grounds that London's unique and idiosyncratic subsoil and water table may not show up the disadvantages of these

constructs, until the well paid engineers who okay them have long since disappeared into the mist.

We also note with concern a growing trend for redeveloping large houses of multi-occupation into ones with a smaller number of self contained units. In this area we have two major hospitals, as well as Imperial College, one of the country's most successful universities. These institutions require affordable accommodation for their workers and students who help to shape the unique character of the area.

We have over the years noted a regrettable trend throughout the borough for useful shops, offices and garages to be converted to residential accommodation. This reduces the amenities in the borough, weakens our sense of community and affects our borough's individual artistic and historical charm.

We feel that local associations such as ONA have an important role to play in helping maintain the character of the area, and also in convincing house owners and developers of the need to consider the requirements of neighbours when maximising their assets.

Roger Baresel, Chairman

The Pembridge Association

The Pembridge Association monitors all planning applications within the Pembridge conservation area which was designated under the Civic Amenities Act (1967) in January 1969. The conservation area is bounded by Notting Hill Gate, Pembridge Road, Portobello Road, Westbourne Grove, Chepstow Place and Ossington Street. It adjoins the City of Westminster on its east boundary, the Ladbroke Conservation area on its west boundary and the Colville Conservation area on its north boundary.

During 2007 we have had the inevitable basement and double basement applications for swimming pools and gymnasias resulting from developers catering for the influx of wealthy new home owners wishing to acquire more fashionable properties

in the area. Fortunately, so far, as a result of refusals, the more recent ones came back with only single basements rather than going to appeal.

One of the tests of the Pembridge Conservation Area Policy Statement (CAPS) has been an application for No 10 Chepstow Place, W2. The original application was for demolition and a modern street elevation that made no attempt to harmonise with the adjacent terrace to the south. Following adverse reaction locally the applicant was advised by the planning department to rethink the proposal and come back with a more acceptable solution.

Residents will appreciate the Association's useful website www.pembridgeassociation.org.uk which has a link to the Council's website. It automatically selects only those planning applications and decisions covering our area thus saving time searching through the Council's website to find the relevant information.

David Campion, Chairman

Victoria Road Area Residents' Association (VRARA)

There has been growing pressure from applications for super-luxury housing, underground development, expanding schools and conversion of shops to housing.

The redevelopment of De Vere Gardens/Victoria Road took us by surprise - we never thought demolition on this scale would be allowed in a conservation area - complete demolition with less than half the façades retained. We negotiated to retain more of the buildings facades, reduce the height and improve the proposed architecture, but we still worry about the three-storey basement - 200m by 45m and 15m deep - the biggest in the Borough.

Proposals for underground development have spawned, especially in Cottesmore Gardens. We are concerned about the high water table (2.5m below the surface), lack of foundations and anecdotal evidence of aquifers and basement flooding.

Thomas' Schools have increased their school roll and want to

expand in this area. Following proposals for 41 Victoria Road, Thomas' Schools now propose to expand into 21 St Albans Grove. We support the Council's proposal to limit pupil numbers to 350, to reduce pupils arriving by car and to favour pupils from within walking distance.

4/5 Victoria Grove, the former post office, has been the subject of applications to get rid of the shops, turning them into two houses. There is currently an appeal as well as four applications pending. VRARA wants to see the shops retained.

Gloucester Road North Local Centre Pilot Ward Initiative

Working with businesses and the Council we want to revitalise this centre, by restoring shop fronts, using grants to encourage change. We want to improve the streetscape, remove clutter, repave and relight the centre, improve crossings and review parking and loading arrangements.

Peter Dixon, Chairman



The Alec Clifton-Taylor Memorial Garden in Church Walk. The garden first opened on 29 November 1991 with support from The Kensington Society. It has recently been restored by the council and once more looks its best as can be seen from this photograph

EVENTS 2008

TO RESERVE A PLACE

Please send cheques for each event
(payable to **The Kensington Society**) and
a **SAE** to **Mrs G Foley, 34 Kelso Place, W8 5QP**.

Tickets will be sent giving full instructions.
Please supply a **contact telephone number**.

Guests are welcome at any of these events.

Wednesday, 16 April 2008 **Central Criminal Court
(Old Bailey)**
Warwick Square, London EC4M 7EH

The Secondary of London and Under Sheriff, Charles Henty, will be our guide. We shall see the Number One Court, the Grand Hall and Roman Wall, statues and artifacts of legal history, and learn about the origins of the jury system.

**Meet at the Lord Mayor's entrance
at 5.45 pm** **£12 per person**

Tuesday, 24 April 2008 **Winfield Garden
Outer Circle,
Regent's Park**

A privileged visit to the garden of the London residence of the US Ambassador. Set in 12 acres of grounds on the western side of Regent's Park, this is the largest private garden in central London after Buckingham Palace.

Fully Booked

Wednesday, 18 June 2008 **Stoner Park and
the Rowing Museum, Henley on Thames**

Discover a journey from the source at Kemble to the Thames Barrier and the story of rowing from ancient Greece to modern Olympics. Lunch at the museum café at own expense.

In the afternoon there will be a private tour of Stoner Park, home to the Camoys family for over 800 years and set in the beautiful Chiltern Hills.

Depart by coach at 9.30 am
Meet at 15 Kensington Square **£33 per person**

Tuesday, 16 September 2008 **Government Art
Collection (GAC), Near Tottenham Court Road W1**

The collection, developed over the past 100 years, contains works of art portraying British life and heritage. We shall be shown a selection of works from the collection and learn about the history and role of the GAC.

**Meet at 6.00 pm for a glass of wine
before 6.30 pm tour** **£10 per person**
Precise location on ticket **including wine**

Tuesday, 4 November 2008 **The Drapers' Hall
Throgmorton Avenue, EC2N 2DQ**

This Livery Company has an unbroken history of over 600 years of existence. We shall see a fine collection of works of art and visit the silver vaults during our tour of the building.

**Meet at the above address at 10.50am
for 11.00 am tour** **£10 per person**

Constitution of The Kensington Society

The Constitution appears on the Society's website at
www.kensingtonsociety.org
alternatively copies can be obtained from
The Secretary, 12 Princedale Road W11 4NJ

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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for their assistance with the compilation of this report:

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The Kensington Society

Receipts and payments account for the year ended 31 December 2007

1 GENERAL CORE FUND

	2007 £	2006 £
Receipts		
Voluntary sources		
Subscriptions	4,967.10	4,827.19
Donations	380.00	1,425.00
Gift Aid	404.70	0.00
Receipts from current year visits	160.00	1,300.00
Advertising in annual report	450.00	1,090.00
Interest	<u>2,112.45</u>	<u>1,917.12</u>
Total receipt	<u>8,474.25</u>	<u>10,559.31</u>
Payments		
Direct charitable expenditure		
Charitable activities	552.97	797.50
Campaigning	2,000.00	0.00
Visits	140.00	1,856.10
Deposits for 2008 activities	<u>1,875.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
	<u>4,567.97</u>	<u>2,653.60</u>
Other expenditure		
Annual report	4,818.50	4,603.90
Stationery / printing	1,370.06	1,534.49
Postage / telephone	508.52	460.83
Typing and Administration	175.00	193.00
Meeting room hire	121.25	40.00
Subscriptions	142.00	92.57
Catering	876.93	703.80
Accounts	475.00	475.00
Bank charges	206.19	0.00
Insurance 2007	288.75	0.00
2008	288.75	0.00
Advertising	<u>180.00</u>	<u>150.00</u>
	<u>9,450.95</u>	<u>8,253.59</u>
Total payments	<u>14,018.92</u>	<u>10,907.19</u>
Net receipts /(payments) for the year	(5,544.67)	(347.88)
Bank balances B/F	50,643.01	50,990.89
Bank balances C/F	<u>45,098.34</u>	<u>50,643.01</u>

The Kensington Society

Statement of assets and liabilities
at 31 December 2007

	Princess Alice Memorial Fund	General Core Fund	2007 Total	2006 Total
	£	£	£	£
Monetary assets				
High interest deposit account	0.00	2.32	2.32	2.31
National Savings Account	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Current account General Core Fund	0.00	4,272.47	4,272.47	4,189.59
CAF Cash account	<u>2,370.41</u>	<u>38,453.14</u>	<u>40,823.55</u>	<u>46,798.99</u>
	<u>2,370.41</u>	<u>42,727.93</u>	<u>£45,098.34</u>	<u>£50,990.89</u>

Treasurer's Report 2007

The Society came through 2007 with strong cash and reserves at £45,098.34. Subscription revenue was on a par with 2006. During the course of the year, the Society contributed £2,000 to a campaign against the proposal to demolish and redevelop Holland Park School and sell their playing field which has been called in by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Anthony Lee

THE BLUE CROSS

Britain's pet charity

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,
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Website: www.bluecross.org.uk

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