

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY



Annual Report 2008

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

23 St James's Gardens, London W11 4RE

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 interest.

Front Cover: 'Addison Avenue - Late Autumn Sun' painted by Clive Wilson.
Find out more about Kensington's local artist on page 57

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THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The Council recently asked what kind of Kensington residents wanted to see develop in future. They have also been consulting on some specific policy areas, namely air quality, noise, subterranean development, tall buildings and the future of the Commonwealth Institute, which is a Grade II* listed building.

It is easier to say what we do not want, than to formulate wishes or expectations about the future. Obviously we want to keep the Kensington of terraces, villas, squares and parks as intact as possible, especially in our extensive conservation areas and to steer new development and refurbishment in an acceptable direction.

There are lessons to be drawn from the experience of others. My wife and I have been lucky enough to live in some outstanding countries and cities which have some interesting and relevant aspects. For example, in Italy most towns and many villages have defined 'historic centres', mainly traffic-free. In these zones almost no development is allowed, only maintenance of what is there.

‘...we want to keep the Kensington of terraces, villas, squares and parks as intact as possible...’

France has some good examples of pedestrianisation. In Paris itself, height and other restrictions have preserved the grand system of wide boulevards and urban vistas, and confined tall buildings largely to the cluster at La Défense. In the United States, Washington D.C., a planned city layout, has height and other stylistic restrictions which preserve the historic areas and important national buildings. In New York, old-style skyscrapers are in a cluster in Lower Midtown Manhattan, then glass buildings



Sir Ronald Arculus

Photograph courtesy of J W Rogers

together in Midtown and now post-modern buildings beyond. Attractive rows of brownstone houses have survived, as have parks. In Rome the historic centre is preserved and pedestrianised and nearly all traffic excluded. In this country a few notable places have retained much of their character, at least in the centre, e.g. Oxford, Cambridge, Bath, York, Chester and Cheltenham.

Turning now to our Kensington, we do not want conspicuously tall buildings, nor ones that do not fit in and clash with local styles (e.g. glasshouses or concrete fortresses).

We resist excessive development which does not respect the neighbourhood, or the neighbours themselves.



Kensington High Street

We want restriction of nuisances, such as excessive noise and dust, damage to other properties, prolonged disruption of our footpaths and streets, obstruction by skips blocking parking for long periods. The modern tendency is to make radical alterations to flats or houses on change of ownership. It is no longer a case of just repainting and minor changes. It is

not easy to obtain compensation for damages caused by developers. We simply do not know yet to what extent deep excavation is harmful to water flows and drainage, though there is anecdotal evidence of parched or flooded gardens as the case may be, of cracking masonry and dying trees.

We are also not free of traffic congestion despite being in the Western Extension of the Congestion Charge Zone, though this is going to be changed in 2010, it appears. In particular we do not want to see our High Street wither away because of competition from the huge new shopping centre at the old White City site in addition to the general recession. We want our residential streets free from rowdiness due to street-drinking which has been encouraged by the non-smoking rules.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2008

The foregoing are general considerations but there are many individual problems outstanding at the year end. Some examples are Holland Park School redevelopment, plans for Exhibition Road, South Kensington Station, future of the Commonwealth Institute building, future of the congestion zone, errant cyclists, fast food eaten in the street, chewing gum, consequences of the Vicarage Gate failure, recycling problems, undesirable changes of use of buildings and so on...

‘...we do not want conspicuously tall buildings, nor ones that do not fit in and clash with local styles...’

Amanda Frame and her team will certainly have their hands full dealing with all the new problems that will arise in '09. They get through a great deal of work and I am grateful to them all.

I write this necessarily at the end of the year covered by our Annual Report. One cannot foretell how events may evolve on the national and international scene, and what new problems may come our way. Perhaps some of the more ambitious and least desirable of developments will need to be postponed or even cancelled! Meanwhile let us all be thankful for the merits and pleasures of life in Kensington and continue to do our bit to help make it liveable.

A New Year wish...

that architects, planners and developers would come forward with designs for modern buildings which manage to embellish our town rather than deface it.

Sir Ronald Arculus

SIR RONALD ARCULUS

The 55th Annual General Meeting of The Kensington Society was held at the Kensington Close Hotel on 9 April 2008. The Mayor, Cllr Andrew Dalton, opened proceedings with rousing words in praise of the Society. He was followed by our President, Sir Ronald Arculus, who welcomed everyone - the guests, members and the representatives of our affiliated local societies.

Sir Ronald then presented The Kensington Society School Prizes. The entries this year from Year 10 pupils were so evenly matched in excellence that the judges had decided to split both the first prize and the second prize. The first prize was shared between

All pictures courtesy of JW Rogers



The Mayor: Cllr Andrew Dalton, Sir Ronald Arculus, Robin Price

Celeste Courtenay and Amil Meckin of the Lycée Français Charles de Gaulle, while the second prize was shared between Julia Sidon of the Lycée, and Elshadai Ejere of the Sion Manning School. Robin Price reported that since the Executive Committee felt that a pause is needed to decide on the future direction of the competition, no prizes would be offered for 2009. The judges were warmly thanked for their work.

The guest speaker was David Prout, Executive Director of Planning and Borough Development. His topics were indeed planning and Borough development, subjects of intense interest to our members, judging by the impressive numbers attending the meeting and the keen response and eager questioning after his talk.



Mr Prout, Guest Speaker

Mr Prout began by setting out the Council's overarching aims: namely, to preserve the best buildings in the Borough, to protect and promote an appropriate mix of uses, to create a legacy of top quality architecture and to promote regeneration in the north of the Borough. He briefly described his team and the scope of their operations, and then moved on to present and future policy developments. He made his subject come alive by illustrating it with examples of issues

and buildings with which many of us are familiar. His presentation was followed by questions from members, who clearly welcomed the chance to meet Mr Prout and quiz him closely. Sir Ronald then thanked Mr Prout on behalf of us all. The audience was thoroughly engaged by these issues, so important to all who live in the Borough.

Sir Ronald, as President, presided over the rest of the business of the meeting. The minutes of the AGM 2007 were confirmed and the Annual Report and Accounts seconded and adopted. The resignation of Mrs Carolyn Starren (Editor of the Annual Report) was reported and regretted. All the other existing members of the Executive Committee were re-elected unopposed.

Robin Price, as Chairman, reported on the highlights of the Society's work during the year. He spoke briefly about the Royal Borough's Commission on Retail Conservation, the future of the Commonwealth Institute, Exhibition Road and the traffic gyratory system around South Kensington Station, Heathrow expansion, the Mayor of London's powers, Notting Hill Gate refurbishment, the St Charles's Hospital site, and the Vicarage Gate Care Home. All these issues would continue to be addressed by the Society.



Robin Price, Chairman



Amanda Frame,
Chairman of the Planning Committee

Amanda Frame, Chairman of the Planning Committee, followed with an analysis of the potential threats that stem from the Government's intention to change planning laws and the Society's current and planned actions to mitigate or prevent any adverse effect on Kensington.

Gill Foley, Events Secretary, outlined the events planned for the coming year. She thanked everyone who had joined the Society in the past and encouraged all members to bring a friend along to one of the future events.

Anthony Lee reported on licensing issues. He outlined the main practical effects of the 2003 Act and what residents can do to counter noise and nuisance from licensed premises. He stressed that residents are not powerless and that a concerted effort by neighbours living within 100 metres can bring beneficial change.

The meeting was closed by Sir Ronald Arculus at 8.30pm.

LOVEDAY WAYMOUTH



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I write this report for the first time as Chairman. In the May Executive Committee meeting Robin Price retired as Chairman after seven fantastic years of leadership. Robin was subsequently elected Vice-Chairman and, fortunately for me, continues to offer his advice and guidance in all matters. Michael Bach became the Chairman of Planning whilst continuing his role with environmental and transport issues. I cannot express how fortunate the Society is to have someone so knowledgeable and professional to address the massively complex planning issues before us.



Amanda Frame

Within this Report is Robin Price's obituary of Ethne Rudd. We miss her greatly in the Executive Committee meetings and we were all shocked and saddened by her unexpected death.

Gill Foley, as Events Secretary, organised several wonderful tours in 2008, including a memorable visit to the Government's Art Collection. The tour of David Linley's studio in mid-March is sold-out; however, there is still availability on trips to Eton College and Savill Garden in May and Fulham Palace in July. The full programme is within the Report. We do hope you can join us on one of these fun and informative trips.

Michael Bach's report outlines the many issues we have faced on the planning front. There have been over 3,500 planning applications this year in Kensington and Chelsea, with the lion's share in Kensington. Applications for subterranean developments continue and they concern us all. The change of use of commercial offices and flats to large single-family houses promises a future of a luxury bedroom community. The quantity of major planning applications has increased. On top of all this there have been the multiple consultations on draft Supplementary Planning Documents and the Local Development Framework (LDF).

Your Society has commented on the consultation document "Heathrow – Adding Capacity" in February. We sent out an email alert to all members whose email address we have, asking for your participation. We have also actively lobbied the new Mayor of London and our MP against this unnecessary, unacceptable and potentially environmentally-damaging and dangerous expansion.



The Society is actively lobbying against Heathrow's expansion

The Council's Commission on Retail Conservation reported in May 2007: of its 54 recommendations, all but nine were supported by the Council. Many will be incorporated into the LDF and its supporting documents. The Council has finally appointed its Town Centre Initiatives Manager. Robin Price, as one of the Retail Commissioners, along with Michael Bach, continues to meet with Council officers to ensure that the Commission's recommendations are fully discharged. The retention and enhancement of retail mix remains an important item on The Society's agenda, particularly in relation to vulnerable areas such as Portobello Road, Golborne Road, Kensington High Street and Brompton Road.

We were delighted to be invited to comment on the draft design proposals for Kensington Palace. The proposal is to modify the east front in order therefore to make it more visible and accessible to the general public. This also has the fortunate

‘...There have been over 3,500 planning applications this year in Kensington and Chelsea, with the lion’s share in Kensington....’

Picture courtesy of RBKC Press Office



Portobello Market: Retail mix remains an important issue for The Society

double purpose of returning the Palace towards its original appearance. We hope to be involved in the continuing consultation process.

On 12 December the Planning Inspector - following several public inquiries before Planning Inspectors and together with Court action - finally ruled on the appeal by the luxury housing developer, Northacre, for the change of use of Vicarage Gate Home, in Vicarage Gate House, to luxury housing. The appeal against refusal of planning consent was allowed. The Society has consistently supported the Council and local residents in their view that the site should be retained for social and community

use (i.e. for care home use). Councillor Christopher Buckmaster (with Robin Price representing the Society) led the opposition together with the Council's QC. In the end the Inspector ruled that the UDP did not support the refusal and that the provision of ten affordable housing units, along with the payment of £2 million by the developers, would offset the loss of the care home. However, the judgement by the Inspector raised some key issues which called into question fundamental clauses of the UDP and the Council has decided to refer the Inspector's ruling to the High Court. Thus the issue remains open.

I hope that all of you received our newly formatted newsletter in October. We are pleased with the positive response. Emma Juhasz has stepped in as our new editor of the Annual Report. I am sure all of you will agree that the updated look on recycled paper is fantastic.

Every year the Chairman's report ends with the plea for new members. Our membership has increased over the year as more residents have become aware of the support we can offer on planning matters. However, at the July Executive Committee meeting an increase to £15 for the individual membership was agreed. The subscription had not changed in over 20 years and with the rising cost of printing and stamps, and our increasing activity, this had become necessary. A separate notification within the newsletter asked members to change their Banker's Order to the Society, or better still, take out a Direct Debit. May we ask members to be sure that they do so.

I wish to end my first Chairman's report with a note of thanks to the Executive Committee. The bi-monthly meetings are always well attended and lively. We move into the challenges of 2009 in good spirit.

AMANDA FRAME
Chairman

OBITUARIES

BELINDA NORMAN BUTLER (1908 – 2008)



All through 2008 her many friends and neighbours hoped Belinda would make her century and when she did so, it was amid general rejoicing. Properly known as Mrs Edward Norman Butler, she was Belinda to all of us. We were all greatly saddened by her death on Boxing Day, but she would, I am sure, want us to remember her for her achievements and to follow her example in actively supporting so many good causes.

Her own list of chairmanships and committees was lengthy, but like many high achievers she somehow found the time for them all. She was proud of being Thackeray's great-granddaughter and of her other family connections in the world of culture. On her mother's side, she was set an example by Charles Booth of the Booth Shipping Line,

who used his wealth in the alleviation of poverty and she wrote of this in her book *Victorian Aspirations*. She had a very strong social conscience.

Belinda had a varied time in her early years, living in Chelsea, Ware and Brussels and, after marriage, Kensington. She first met Edward at Cambridge, then again in Henley and they were married in 1931 at St Martin-in-the-Fields, London. When Edward went off to the War, Belinda moved to Cambridge where her daughter, Catherine, was born.

It was after the War that Belinda spotted the house on St Alban's Grove in a dilapidated state. She joined Edward in belonging to the Georgian Group and became an early member of The Kensington Society; she joined in the struggles in defence of Kensington Square and Holland House.

In 1958, she helped Frank Pakenham set up the New Bridge, an organisation to help ex-prisoners find work.

Sadly in 1963 Edward died, aged only 56. Belinda plunged into many activities to help her overcome the shock of her early loss. She succeeded Edward in the Kensington Housing Trust and in the Nightingale Trust (nurses). She was an active member of Campden charities; she became a governor of several schools and of the Arts Educational Trust. She was also one of the selectors of candidates for the Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO).

I have left music until the last because it was a life-long interest, and perhaps her best and most lasting achievement. Her nanny introduced her to music at an early age and, along with her two sisters, she sang in the choir of St Martin-in-the-Fields. Then she attended and studied music at Mrs Ironside's School, after which she went to the Conservatoire in Brussels and in 1920 to the Royal College of Music (RCM), where she studied piano and viola - one of her tutors was Ralph Vaughan Williams. Later she sang for many years in the Bach Choir. She also became a governor of the Purcell School of Music and organised concerts. In 1969, she began her major project of setting up music scholarships in the English Speaking Union (ESU). This was launched at Tanglewood Music Centre in Massachusetts, the summer school of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and in 1975 Nigel Kennedy was the first person to be selected for the scholarship.

I had some experience of her work when I attended meetings to organise a major fundraising event to benefit the ESU scheme. Belinda was a persuasive chairman and carried others along with her through her own enthusiasm, rather than by more forceful but less effective tactics; she achieved results. She always nourished her love of music and remained close to the RCM and the Purcell School. In later years, she was a familiar figure in the audience at local musical events, including concerts at Christ's Church, Victoria Road where she was a regular worshipper.

Our most abiding memory of Belinda will perhaps be of her last occasion when we called on her for tea at home. She took us into the dining room and showed us the various items of Thackeray memorabilia that she had carefully preserved and told us where each one would eventually go in order to ensure their survival in appropriate places. Over tea, we looked out over the garden which she had lovingly created and had shown off to visitors when the flowers were at their best.

We all have our own ways of remembering her lively personality and varied achievements. The Kensington Society was particularly grateful to her for her support over the years and for sharing her in-depth knowledge of Kensington. I referred in a recent Annual Report of her great sense of history and phenomenal memory. On behalf of all our members, I express our deep sympathy to the family in their loss of a truly remarkable mother and grandmother; and our most sincere gratitude for all she did for the Kensington she loved. Personally, I would like to add thanks for the fine example she gave us of how to grow old gracefully.

SIR RONALD ARCULUS

OBITUARIES

ETHNE RUDD (1929 – 2008)

Ethne Rudd, Honorary Secretary of the Society 1995-2007, died peacefully on 6 July 2008, surrounded by her family.

Courtesy of Times Newspaper Ltd



Ethne and Kensie

Born in Kensington, the third of five girls, Ethne was educated at Queen's Gate in Kensington, Cheltenham Ladies' College and St Anne's College Oxford - where she met her future husband, Anthony. For 25 years she was a London magistrate - where she was chairman in the Adult and Family Courts, and of the Betting and Gaming Tribunal. She was an active member of St Mary Abbots and a leading member of its parochial church council. Along with her husband, she edited, re-organised and enlarged the excellent parish magazine. Truly a 'Kensingtonian', she even had a dog called Kensington - 'Kensie' for short - who almost became the Society's mascot. She even ensured,

with characteristic determination that her much-loved family of four children and 12 grandchildren, ended up living within half a mile of each other in Kensington.

As our ever-cheerful, ebullient and active Honorary Secretary for 13 years, she was very much the public face of The Kensington Society - a role which she created, fulfilled, and hugely enjoyed.

She was a giver, and in her own description, a doer. Members will especially recall her relentless campaign against the Government's misguided proposals in 1997 to cover the much-used and much-loved green spaces, facing the south front of Kensington Palace with a £10 million, 27 acre garden in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales. Responding to the alarm of residents, Ethne organised, what became an overflowing and emphatic, public meeting in Kensington Town Hall - over 1,000 people attended the meeting in June 1998, undeterred by torrential rain and a tube strike. By further campaigning and by enlisting the aid of Kensington's MP, Alan Clark - who arranged a

private ministerial meeting with Chris Smith, the then Secretary of State - the tide was eventually turned. The Government tacitly acknowledged its mistake, by diverting the main project to Hyde Park. The existing children's playground to the north of the Palace was enhanced and enlarged and a Diana memorial walkway was created. Throughout, The Kensington Society had insisted that its opposition was to the site, not to a memorial in principle. Through Ethne's energy and determination, Robert Vigar's able chairmanship of the public meetings, and the skilful and diplomatic representation by Sir Ronald Arculus, an acceptable balance had been reached.

Ethne was enormous fun to work with. If sometimes unpredictable, but that was part of the adventure of knowing her, and it was certainly part of her creativity. She was warm, cheerful, friendly and practical, with a splendid sense of humour; and in her own inimitable, generous and cheerfully determined way, a tremendous successor to the formidable Gay Christiansen. Above all, Ethne was profoundly Christian and indeed a shining light to us all. She was unique. We shared in her energy. We are all grateful to have known her. We miss her hugely.

ROBIN PRICE

The Kensington Society regrets to announce the deaths of the following members during the last year:	
Mrs H C Gilbert	Her husband was a Life member since 1972 and she took over his membership when he died.
Miss M Turner	A member since 1999
R Wurtzburg Esq	A member since 1991 and his widow has taken over his membership.
Dr A Dornhorst, FRCP	A life member since 1983
Miss E F Penelope Hawkes	A member since 1970
James T N MacNair	A member since 1984
H M Coutts-Trotter	A life member since the Society was founded in 1954



THE RESTORATION OF LEIGHTON HOUSE MUSEUM

At the end of October 2008, Leighton House Museum closed for a period of 12 months restoration and refurbishment. The project is the result of a survey of the building carried out in 2006, which recognised that the electrical wiring throughout the house was in need of renewal, as were the fire and intruder detection systems. The antiquated heating system was also identified as creating an unsuitable environment for paintings. While these practical considerations will take up the bulk of the project's costs and complexities, there is also a unique opportunity to return the house to a new level of authenticity.

‘At the time of his death in 1896, his ‘Private Palace of Art’ was one of the most extraordinary houses in London...’

All pictures Courtesy of Leighton House Museum



Frederic Leighton (1830-1896) was the only person to live in the house that he built on Holland Park Road. He was involved at every stage of its construction and it was completed in the late 1860s, but the house continued to evolve throughout the thirty years that Leighton was in residence. At the time of his death in 1896, his ‘Private Palace of Art’ was one of the

most extraordinary houses in London, not only for its architectural and decorative character, but also for the range and quality of the fine and decorative art collections that filled it. The great tragedy of the house remains the sale and disbursement of these contents at Christie's in the summer following Leighton's death. In a number of instances, the house had been specifically designed to display certain works of art, the collection and house fusing together to form an aesthetic whole. The loss of the contents resulted in the loss of this connection. Leighton's original decorative schemes gradually eroded and were totally removed during repairs and redecorations made in the 1950s, following substantial bomb damage in WWII. Only since the early 1980s has the reinstatement of Leighton's original decoration gathered pace and the character of the interiors re-established.

However, research completed for a new guidebook to the house in 2005, confirmed that in many areas the current presentation was really only an approximation of how the interiors had originally been presented. Much could be done to recreate the house's former spectacular appearance. Original reports in specialist architectural journals and the general press of the time have been an invaluable source. Their articles were almost akin to the features we might read today in *Hello* magazine, as they would

include a light interview with the owner of the house, together with detailed descriptions of their home, supported by carefully posed photographs. While these articles often provide surprisingly detailed information on each room and its decor, the problem is in how they describe colour. At the best of times, colour is a notoriously subjective commodity



Silk Room, 1890

and the passage of time doesn't help in how we interpret and characterise it now. For example, the colour of the large screen in Leighton's studio is described in just a single source, as being a 'peculiar blue' – not a reference likely to appear on a standard colour-chart! The silk room was lined in 'a warm, faded leaf-green silk', the dining room in 'cigar-tinted cloth'. While these provide crucially important information, it is far from definitive and each could be interpreted to achieve very different results. The

many photographs of the interiors are, of course, all in black and white and do not help clarify matters.



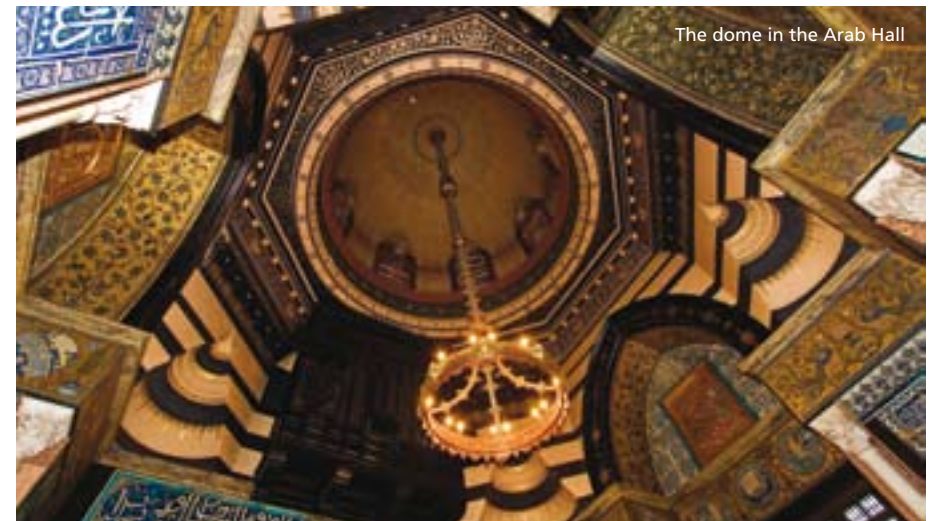
Arab Hall, 1890

In order to take our understanding further, therefore, we've employed an architectural paint specialist. The science and sophistication of paint analysis has grown enormously, even since the early 1980s when the restoration of the house began. Where once paintwork might have been scratched at and the 'original' colour identified beneath; today samples are taken, then analysed

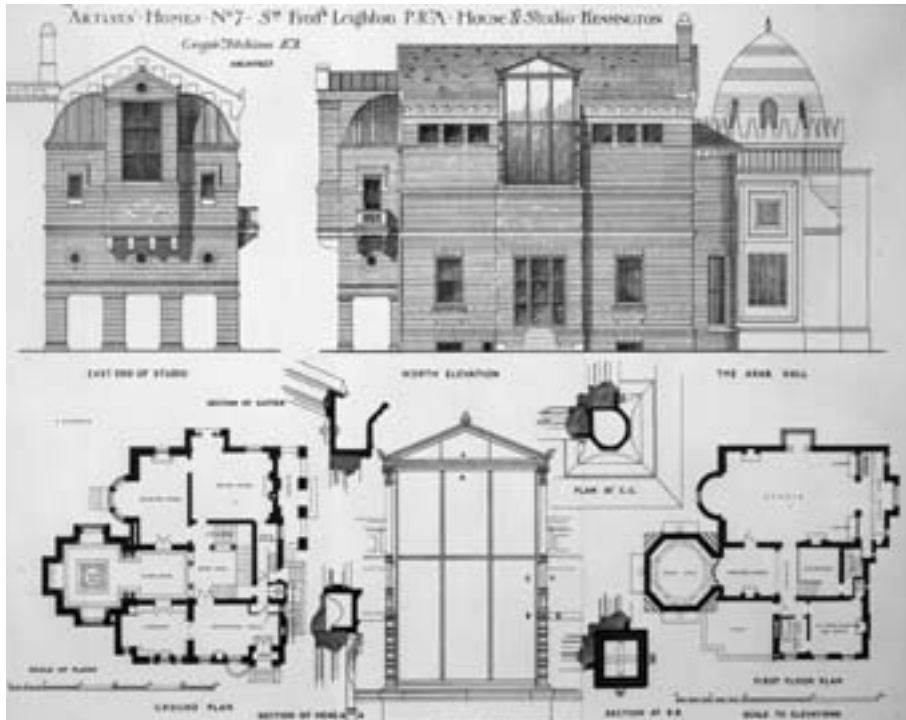
microscopically to work out the complexities of the various layers of priming coats and finishes beneath. Many areas of the house have been sampled in order to test some of the room descriptions and in some instances to re-visit some of the decisions made in the 1980s restorations.

'...when Leighton House reopens to the public at the end of 2009, it will look closer to how Leighton himself left it than at any point in the last hundred years...'

The result has been to confirm that the decoration in the house was even more extraordinary. According to contemporary articles, the floorboards in the dining room and drawing room were painted red and blue respectively. No obvious trace survived but when some of the boards were lifted in each room, pigment was still visible where it had run down the sides. Several other descriptions drew particular attention to the dome of the Arab Hall. The most spectacular interior in the house, the dome was covered originally in gold leaf, which was illuminated by sunlight coming through the many coloured glass windows set into it. Post-war re-painting covered over the gilding, losing this stunning effect. Some of the gilding has been rediscovered, but in a very poor condition, so the dome will now be re-gilded as the centrepiece of the restoration project.



The dome in the Arab Hall



Plans and drawings of Leighton House extension, *Building News*, 1880

Leighton's library on the ground floor, built as part of the extension of 1877-1880, was the last of the interiors to be restored in the late 1980s: reinstating a terracotta scheme with a yellow ceiling. Revisiting the analysis of this room, has revealed that predating the terracotta was a sage-green. An article on the house, published in the Australian daily newspaper, *The Argus* in 1883, confirmed that the library had been a 'sober sage-green'. In the absence of any indication of this being changed in Leighton's lifetime, this is the scheme that will be reintroduced. In the dining room, the large red ceiling beams were redecorated in the early 1980s. New architectural paint analysis has confirmed that the current colour is a perfect match to the undercoat colour of the original scheme and not the finish colour!

The servants' staircase has always been in use by the museum staff, but not the public. We hope to change this, as they are part of the original historic fabric of the building and help us understand how it functioned. Not only were they frequented by servants, but by the models who posed for Leighton in his studio. Rather than being painted in a dull practical brown, analysis has found that the staircase was painted in a striking Prussian blue.



‘ New architectural paint analysis has confirmed that the current colour is a perfect match to the undercoat colour of the original scheme and not the finish colour!’

While the original furnishings for the house were all sold and dispersed. Some selective re-furnishing of the house will also be undertaken. In addition, the interiors are also going to be enhanced by the introduction of new soft furnishings throughout. Based on detailed analysis of the original photographs, in many instances the type of textiles and even the patterned fabrics can be identified. All this will go a long way to softening the presentation of the house as a museum and enhancing its domestic character.

If all goes to plan, when Leighton House reopens to the public at the end of 2009, it will look closer to how Leighton himself left it, than at any point in the last hundred years - once more becoming one of the most spectacular interiors in London.

DANIEL ROBBINS

Senior Curator, Leighton House Museum

PLANNING IN 2008

This has been a very busy year. Not only has there been a very large number of planning applications to review, but there have been a number of major consultations, major applications and significant issues that we have had to address.

CONSULTATIONS

Local Development Framework (LDF): The Council has been preparing its new-style development plan and has had two major consultation exercises during the year: an Interim Issues and Options report in February and in July on the Core Strategy and North Kensington Plan. This amounts to a rethinking about how we want things to develop and where we want to get to over the next ten years. The Society made a full response to both of these documents. While welcoming the Council spelling out the vision and strategy for planning for the future, we were concerned about the scale of change proposed in North Kensington.

Supplementary Planning Documents: To support the existing UDP and the emerging LDF, the Council has produced a number of supplementary planning documents (SPDs) on Transport, Subterranean Development, Tall Buildings, the Commonwealth Institute, Noise and Air Quality. We have commented on all of these.

The Society is concerned about the SPD on tall buildings because, even though much of the Borough would be protected from them because they would be resisted in conservation areas, there appears to be some enthusiasm for creating 'landmark' buildings at all the 'gateways' to the Borough along the western boundary. This would seem to include not only the 'Tesco Tower', but tall buildings (watchtowers?) at all the other 'gateways'. There seems to be a presumption that a landmark building is needed, and that it needs to be tall.



View of the Holiday Inn from Victoria Road

The issue of subterranean development has been a concern of the Society for the last two years. We were disappointed by the Arup report, largely because they could only advise on engineering and geological issues and did not deal with the wider planning considerations. The Council's draft SPD does cover wider issues, but the whole issue has been obfuscated by the uncertainty created by the Government widening the range of developments that do not require planning consent. Whereas previously all underground development, including extensions, required consent, some may now not need consent. Rather than make things simpler, the issue is now more complex.



Underground work at The Boltons with loss of pedestrian access to the pavement

London Plan: Following the election of a new Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, in May, he has consulted on proposals to revise the London Plan. Issues that affect Kensington include affordable housing, density and tall buildings, which we will monitor closely.

MAJOR APPLICATIONS:

Warwick Road sites: At the beginning of 2008 the Council issued a new planning brief for four of the major development sites along Warwick Road north of West Cromwell Road. The brief sought to secure a comprehensive development, including open space and community facilities, a primary school, and improvements to Warwick Road itself. However, the brief encourages very high-density schemes – higher than their location would justify – as the developers have sought to squeeze the maximum amount on the sites. The brief has succeeded in getting the developers to address some of the issues, but only one of the schemes submitted to date have been approved.

100 West Cromwell Road (aka Tesco Tower): After being rejected by the Council in July 2007, has been the subject of a further unsatisfactory proposal. The Council has sought to break the log jam by preparing a planning brief for this site. The Society welcomes this initiative, but is concerned that the Council is still proposing to allow the same density of development as the previously rejected scheme, even though it would be built on top of the existing structure – it will start five floors up in the air. The options being offered by the Council include the choice of towers 60m (197ft), 90m (295ft) or 120m (394ft) high – when the last scheme that was refused was 93m (305ft) high. The Society considers that the density and height should be reduced.

Holland Park School: The Council's proposal for a redevelopment involving a much taller school building and the development of the southern part of the site for high-income market housing was approved by the Council, despite considerable local opposition. The scheme may, however, experience problems due to uncertainty in the housing market.



Existing Holland Park School

Picture courtesy of RBKC Press Office

expressed concerns have been made: that the scheme should be conservation-led, that it should retain the buildings in Thurloe Terrace, not include buildings that would exceed the general height of the area and include step-free access to the platforms, as an integral part of the scheme, but they seem reluctant to constrain their consultants' ideas for the site. They say, however, they are listening.

Natural History Museum: There has been growing concern about the increased use of the lawns in front of the (Grade-I listed) Natural History Museum for erecting structures for housing events. Few are directly associated with the Museum and often not open to the public. Last year the East Lawn was occupied for nearly 90% of the year by structures being erected, in use or being broken down. Though the Society understands the Museum's desire to raise money, we and other local groups are concerned that these temporary uses have become excessive and are damaging to the setting of the Museum.



South Kensington Station



View from the portico of the Natural History Museum

ISSUES:

Flooding: Following the flooding in July 2007, we have become very aware of the risk of flooding, not so much from the Thames, but from storm sewers that cannot cope with rapid run-off. The Counter's Creek sewer that runs down the western boundary of the Borough, caused particular problems, with many properties in the Holland and Norland wards having their basements flooded. Since then Thames Water have been unable to commit themselves to increasing the capacity of the storm sewer within the next 15 years, which means that there is a risk of flooding. We have supported local residents in their efforts to get action from the Council and, through our MP, Sir Malcolm Rifkind, to compel Thames Water to take remedial action.

South Kensington and Exhibition Road:

The Council has redesigned the one-way system around South Kensington Station, which will remove the circuitous route for drivers, redesign the space to the south of the station and give pedestrian priority in Thurloe Place and the southern part of Exhibition Road. This scheme will be completed by the end of 2009. In addition, in partnership with Westminster City Council and the Museums, the Council is promoting an innovative streetscape scheme for Exhibition Road which would make Exhibition Road north of Cromwell Road a shared space – a redesigned space shared by cars and pedestrians. The Society welcomes both these projects which will create a much more civilised environment for both residents and the millions of visitors.



New design for Exhibition Road

Picture courtesy of RBKC Press Office

Retail Commission: Kensington High Street v Westfield London: Following the report of the Council's Retail Commission in 2007, the Society has maintained an active interest in the Council's efforts to try to manage the future of our shopping centres. We are particularly pleased that the Council has created a new post to promote town centre initiatives – one of the key recommendations of the Commission. This is timely, given the opening of Westfield London at White City at the end of October, which is expected to take 10-15% of Kensington High Street's trade.

PCT Healthcare in London: During 2008 NHS London consulted on how Primary Health Care could be delivered more efficiently, floating the idea of centralising doctors in Polyclinics. In Kensington and Chelsea, St Charles Hospital has already become the location for a Polyclinic; however it seems likely that this centralised model will not be appropriate for the rest of the Borough, where health centres are being considered as a less centralised solution.

Small offices/large offices: The Society is very concerned that about 28,000sqm (over 300,000sqft) of small offices have been converted to housing since 2000, amounting to the loss of about 2,500 jobs. The housing boom has cleared away many small offices. Meanwhile, the Council has allowed large-scale office developments in parts of the Borough with low public transport accessibility, such as the Freston Road area.

We are concerned that the Council is deciding these contrary to their own policy.

Social and Community Uses: The Society has been very concerned also about the loss of buildings and sites in health and education uses to market housing, when there are still unmet needs for these and other social and community uses. The Borough has lost many such sites and buildings over the last 20 years, which makes further losses very worrying. We were pleased to see that the Council has developed a new approach to the disposal of such sites, requiring owners to demonstrate that the potential for social and community uses has been exhausted before they are "lost" to housing. This approach was taken in the planning brief for Princess Louise Hospital, but we have yet to see the result.



Large scale developments

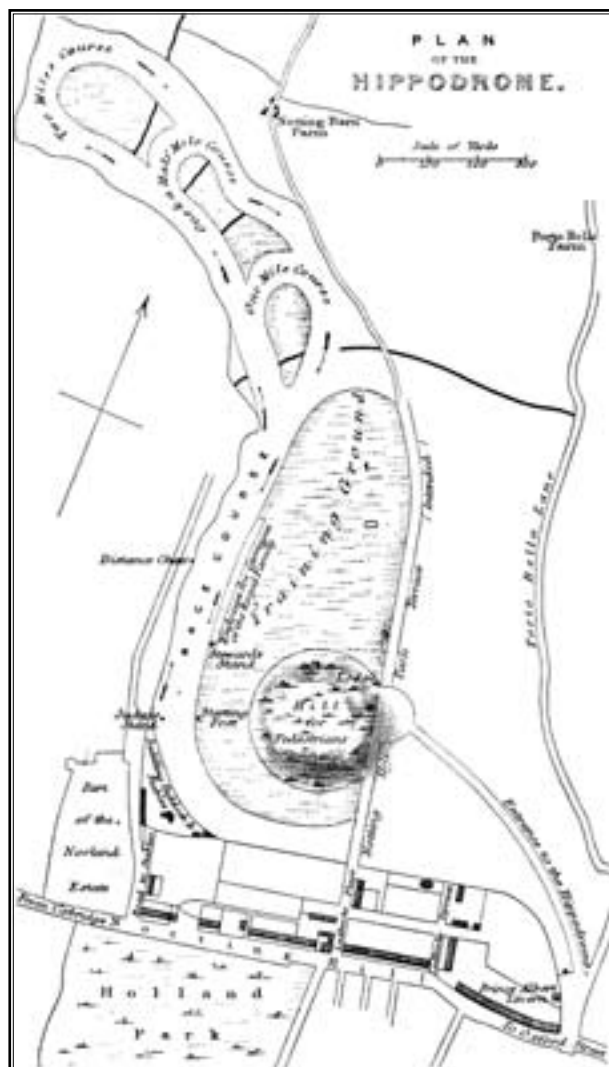
Houses in Multiple Occupation: Bedsits have traditionally provided one of the few forms of affordable housing in the Borough, especially for people working in some of the lower-paid sectors. Over the last few years the remaining stock has come under pressure for conversion to large flats or single-family houses. Apart from a significant loss of affordable housing, the loss of these units has to be made good by building more housing. We are concerned that the pressures in the housing market are eliminating this useful source of affordable housing.

Permitted Development: Finally, the Government, in an attempt to reduce the amount of development requiring planning consent, has sought to "simplify" planning: it no longer requires applications for certain types of proposals, particularly extensions to houses. However, many existing controls will remain for listed buildings and those in conservation areas. If anything, the changes have created uncertainty and a more complicated rather than a simpler system. We have asked the Council to provide some guidance that explains how the new system will work in Kensington.

MICHAEL BACH
Chairman, Planning

HOW NOTTING HILL GOT OFF TO A RACING START

All pictures courtesy of RBKC Local Studies Section



PLAN OF THE HIPPODROME (1837-1841)

It is recorded that only 13 meetings were staged with a total of 23 days' racing

In 1933, E. Norman Butler, writing for *Country Life*, said that there were 'few places of London as historically uninteresting as Notting Hill'. He goes on to describe it as, 'a dingy street of second-rate shops which causes an irritating bottle-neck on the way to the Great West'. Norman Butler does concede though that from 1837 to 1841, the area did undergo an interesting transformation. In fact, this period was fundamental to the architectural development of the area and even heralded one of the earliest examples of Garden Town Planning.

When you consider Notting Hill's imposing houses and large gardens, it is hard to believe that they owe their existence to horses. In the early 19th Century, Notting Hill used to be a peaceful hamlet set in the countryside, but in 1837 Mr John Whyte of Brace Cottage, Notting Hill acquired 200 acres of meadowland from the ground landlord, Mr Ladbroke, with the intention of building a racecourse that was grander than Ascot or Epsom. On the land he constructed an oval-shaped course of two and a quarter miles, with a steeplechase course on the outside of the racecourse. The land was topped by Notting Hill - on which now stands St John's Church, known for a long time after as The Hippodrome Church – where the public gathered for views across the racecourse.

‘When you consider Notting Hill’s imposing houses and large gardens, it is hard to believe that they owe their existence to horses.’

The racecourse opened on 3 June 1837, with an attendance of over 13,000 people and it was considered a great success - *Sporting Magazine* reported at the time that it was 'the most perfect racecourse'. However, all was not well. Locals had vociferously objected to the construction of the racecourse and in particular to it closing a public footpath, which went over the top of Notting Hill towards Paddington. On the opening day, a crowd of angry locals armed with hatchets and saws tore down the fences which blocked the pathway and stormed the racecourse – providing free access to thousands.

Whyte attempted to preserve the disputed pathway for his racecourse and he even resorted to putting up iron railings in place of the wooden fencing. However, he could not ignore the growing opposition. The Kensington parishioners, in particular, were known for their fierce resistance. They continually broke into the course and on one occasion they got to the top of Notting Hill, where they gave a rallying cry for their cause - three resounding cheers for the Parish of Kensington! By 1839, Whyte's acquisition of this disputed land was being debated at the Court of the King's Bench and in Parliament, so he gave it up and enclosed other ground instead.



'In and Out', Engraving of the last steeplechase at The Hippodrome by Henry Alken



'The First Hurdle', Engraving of the last steeplechase at The Hippodrome by Henry Alken

‘...the course was tactfully renamed the Victoria Park Hippodrome to compliment the new, young queen.’

If local animosity was not enough to contend with, Whyte was also fighting the elements. The racecourse's foundations were strong, clay soil and whenever there was heavy rain, the course turned into a bog. The public's carriages got stuck in the mud and the racecourse became too dangerous for the horses to be ridden on. Disgruntled public swore they'd never return, while owners and jockeys alike refused to race. It became a logistical nightmare for Whyte to hold meetings and throughout The Hippodrome's short history (1837-1841). It is recorded as having staged only 13 meetings with a total of 23 days' racing.

Whyte did everything he could to placate the growing disquiet about the racecourse. He offered his dissenting local public free admission on Sundays, with a reduced rate of 2d on some holidays. However his actions only went further to horrify the locals, who were disgusted by his liberal desecration of the Sabbath. Opposition was also growing in other areas, as concern was mounting about the increasing number of gambling houses, beer-houses and gin-shops in the area and many felt that The Hippodrome was responsible for bringing 'the scum and offal of London...to the peaceful hamlet of Notting Hill' (*Brownings Papers*). The odds, it seemed, were stacking up against Whyte.



'The Brook', Engraving of the last steeplechase at The Hippodrome by Henry Alken

The course however did begin to triumph, as it began to attract elite members of society. In 1839, various members of royalty attended the races: including Prince Frederick of the Netherlands, the Duke of Cambridge, the Marquess of Anglesey and the Marquess of Worcester. They were probably enticed to attend after the Grand Duke of Russia presented the Gold Cup at one of the races, but in any event, the course's reputation did seem to be growing. This must have been a great relief to Whyte, as King William IV had died suddenly just a fortnight after the course opened in 1837 and he had feared that people, in particular the nobility, would feel it was inappropriate to go to the races at this time of mourning. This did not seem to be

the case, but to ensure goodwill with the public, the course was tactfully renamed Victoria Park Hippodrome, to compliment the new, young queen.

In 1840 though, it was apparent that there were financial difficulties. It had been announced at the beginning of that year, that 'Produce Stakes of 50 sovereigns, with 1000 sovereigns by the proprietor' would be run triennially. Within a year, Whyte announced he couldn't afford to do this and keep the low admission prices – which he subsequently raised. In 1841, a successful steeplechase was run on 2 June, famously commemorated in four paintings by Henry Alken (all pictured).



'The Last Fence', Engraving of the last steeplechase at The Hippodrome by Henry Alken

However, in May the following year Whyte announced that due to heavy financial losses it was impossible to run the races that had been advertised for the year. It was the final hurdle for The Hippodrome and the land was swiftly sold to builders. Plans for Kensington Park Estate were quickly drawn up – they included around 15 common gardens and various homes with private gardens. While part of the course was kept open for horse-exercise until 1852, The Hippodrome Racecourse had run its course.

EMMA JUHASZ

NORTH KENSINGTON ENVIRONMENT PROJECT

In a Borough where many residents have no gardens, attractive parks and other open spaces are especially important. Led by the Council's North Kensington Environment Manager, Terry Oliver, The Project's programme of environmental improvements continues, backed by initiatives to encourage the involvement of the community, particularly in maintenance.



Before and after the creation of Elkstone Road Sensory Garden

Following the success of the vegetable garden at the Pupil Referral Unit, unused sites in the north of the Borough are being sought for community kitchen gardens. A pilot scheme for creating green roofs has also begun, ten possibilities have been identified and three should be soon be underway. The Sunbeam Gardens consultation showed they were not being used by many residents because of concern over safety and the lack of facilities for young children. As a result there is to be a new play area and extensive landscaping of the grounds. In the light of residents' priorities, plans for nearby Little Wormwood Scrubs, now managed by the Council, include an adventure playground, a kick-about area and a preserved habitat for wildlife.



The Ladbrooke Grove Canal Entrance before and after new planting

New projects on the horizon include upgrading Hurstway Walk beside Latimer Road station, where there is poor lighting and paving, and ageing street furniture. The Walk has several owners and is a good candidate for a partnership approach to the environmental improvements. Golborne Road Railway Bridge also falls into this category and discussions are being held with Network Rail about improving its appearance. Beneath peeling paint is a fine metal structure and the bridge has the potential to be an impressive and attractive entrance to Golborne Road Market.

CELIA REES-JENKINS



A new planter to prevent fly tipping in Munro Mews

ENVIRONMENT AWARD SCHEME 2008

The Council's Award Scheme attracted eight nominations in Kensington, three of which received an Award. The scheme aims to recognise design work of merit which, though often small in scale, has a beneficial impact on the appearance of the Borough's streets and open spaces.

ALL pictures courtesy of McCoy associates

PORTOBELLO DOCK

Portobello Dock, new offices and a converted and extended older building, was the largest project. The office building is striking when entering the Royal Borough along Ladbroke Grove and was judged to be particularly impressive, with its juxtaposition of bronze coloured window frames with white render, creating what the assessors felt to be a gentle dignity not discordant with other smaller buildings nearby. It was considered deserving of the Award for commercial development. It was designed by Stiff & Trevillion Architects.



WASHBOARD HOUSE

A new building of similar size, The Washboard House, Simon Close, Portobello Road, was judged to be a well-detailed and intriguing response to its particular mews context. The disciplined achievement of a grand scale without any increase in size over neighbouring dwellings was admired and deemed worthy of an Award. It was designed by Studio Bednarski.



COURTFIELD GARDENS WEST

Two impressive garden square railings reinstatement projects were nominated. Pembridge Square is the grander of these, but the assessors felt the new railings at Courtfield Gardens West was the better project and made an Award to it and a Commendation to Pembridge Square. The award-winning scheme was designed by the Garden Committee with the help of their contractors and the Pembridge Square project by Susan Walker.



37 POTTERY LANE

A replacement building at 37 Pottery Lane was recognised as a distinctive modern building which looks good without over-striving to be exciting. It is an instance of modern and contemporary details working well even when none of the conventional characteristics of mews, such as second-hand stock brickwork seen nearby, is incorporated. The project was commended.



LADBROKE GROVE TUBE STATION BRIDGE

Enhancements to the bridge outside Ladbroke Grove tube station include a profiled surface to the covering of the abutment walls which reduces fly posting. The white soffit of the bridge adds to the brightening up of the area, and though there were some doubts about the quality of the art work on the bridge itself those assessors familiar with the area after dark were in no doubt that what has been done represents a very great improvement. The works, designed by Urban Eye/Westway Project, were awarded a commendation.



NEWS FROM THE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA PARTNERSHIP

The Royal Borough's third community strategy, 'The Future of Our Community 2008-2018', updates its predecessor, incorporates new objectives and emphasises the importance of developing a sustainable community. It also sets out goals for members of the Partnership to work towards, as they endeavour to improve the quality of life for those living and working in the Borough.

Many of the aims in the strategy are connected and these links are shown in a diagram at the end of each chapter. It also cross references policies in the Local Development Framework, which has a major role in supporting the strategy. In the chapter on Environment and Transport, a new section highlights the importance of tackling the causes of climate change in the Borough and how to adapt to some of its unavoidable effects. Indicators will be used to monitor how the aims and objectives of the strategy are met, especially those concerned with reducing carbon dioxide emissions arising from the Council's own operations and increasing the amount of recycled and composted household waste. A plan is being developed to cover these, as well as locally determined targets, and after discussions with the Government, it will form the new Local Area Agreement for Kensington and Chelsea (due to be published in April 2009).

Copies of the Community Strategy and its supporting documents should be available from the Borough's Public Libraries and from the Town Hall.

CELIA REES-JENKINS

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY SCHOOL PRIZES FOR 2008

Pupils in our secondary schools were asked to write about someone who lived in Kensington, whom they felt should have a memorial dedicated to them. They had to explain why they chose this person, what the memorial should be and where in Kensington it should be placed.

There were entries from Year 7-8 pupils, and since the entries from Year 10 (ages 14-15) were so close in quality, the Judges decided to split the First and Second Prizes. The First Prize therefore went to Celeste Courtenay and Amil Meckin (both of the Lycée) who each received £100. The Second Prize went to Julia Sidon (Lycée) and Elshadai Ejere (Sion-Manning), who each received £50.

Picture courtesy of J W Rogers



Sir Ronald Arculus with the winners

A breathing space is now needed to enable the Executive Committee to take stock and decide in which direction the competition could go. There will therefore be no competition for 2009. Future such competitions will be for the Executive Committee to discuss and decide.

We thank all those, particularly the Judges: Diana Hall (RBKC Isaac Newton Centre), Shirley Nicholson (of this Society), Dave Walker (RBKC Local Studies Librarian) who have all so generously and enthusiastically taken part for the last five years. We believe it has been, and may yet be again, a useful exercise for all concerned.

ROBIN PRICE

EDITOR'S NOTE

All the winning entries are published on our website, please visit: www.kensingtonsociety.org



Kensington's residents, past and present, are a veritable who's who list. While today's popular figures guard their privacy, great historical figures are easily found thanks to Blue Plaques on their previous homes.

The Blue Plaques scheme was set up in 1867 by the Royal Society of Arts to honour eminent Londoners. The first plaque was awarded to the Romantic poet, Lord Byron – his home has subsequently been demolished – and was followed in 1875 by Emperor Napoleon III (King Street, St James) and the poet, John Dryden (Gerrard Street, West End), whose plaques survive today.

The scheme is now run by the English Heritage and there are over 800 plaques across London. While Kensington may not have the oldest ones, it has an extraordinary collection of honoured talent. So next time you stroll through the Borough's elegant streets, remember to look up, as you may be passing a former resident's castle. To entice you to start looking, here are just a few of the Borough's illustrious past residents.



AGATHA CHRISTIE (1890-1976)
58 Sheffield Terrace, W8

The hugely successful crime writer lived here from 1934-1941 with her second husband, Max Mallowan. She was at the height of her fame at this time. The inimitable Belgian detective, Hercule Poirot had been introduced to readers in Christie's début novel, *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* in 1920, and the inquisitive elderly spinster, Miss Jane Marple, made her first enquiries in *The Murder at the Vicarage*, 1930.

Christie's career began during WWI. While she waited for her fighter pilot husband, Archie Christie, to return from the war, she nursed at the local hospital. It was here that she gained her experiences in poisons, as she studied for exams for the Society of Apothecaries, which subsequently became part of her inspiration to write crime novels. In fact Christie received praise for her first novel from *The Pharmaceutical Journal* for, ".....dealing with poisons in a knowledgeable way and not with the nonsense about untraceable substances that so often happens. Miss Agatha Christie knows her job".

Christie later divorced Archie and went on to marry Max Mallowan in 1930, an archaeologist, whom she met in Mesopotamia - just one of her many adventurous trips to the East. She wrote for over half a century, producing over 80 novels and short story collections. Her final published work was her autobiography in 1976. It was in here that she revealed where she had lived in Kensington. However, being the master of suspense, she left her audience with one final mystery to solve. She wrote that she lived at No 48 Sheffield Terrace, and for a long time this was assumed to be her correct residence. However, as plans went ahead for her plaque to be erected, the clues were in the Electoral Register and it was discovered that Christie had in fact lived at No. 58 instead.



All pictures courtesy of RBKC Local Studies Section



SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL (1874-1965)
28 Hyde Park Gate, SW7

This was Churchill's London residence after he was defeated in the post war elections in 1945. He acquired No. 28 in 1945, then later bought No. 27 for office accommodation and knocked the two houses together. He briefly returned to 10 Downing Street (1951-55) for a further term as Prime Minister, but he returned to Hyde Park Gate after he resigned in 1955. Churchill continued to act as an MP until shortly before his death at 28 Hyde Park Gate on 24 January 1965.

Widely considered as Britain's greatest political figure of 20th Century, Churchill's extraordinary leadership during WWII was just one of his many achievements. He was a statesman, historian and biographer. His extensive literary works included biographies of his father, Lord Randolph Churchill and his ancestor Lord Marlborough; a history of WWI and his memoirs of WWII. His inspirational oratory also survives in various volumes.

He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1953, 'for his mastery of historical and biographical description, as well as for brilliant oratory for defending exalted human values'. In the same year he was knighted and in the following year, the Queen and Parliament declared him as 'the greatest living Briton'.

As one of Kensington's most esteemed residents, he received the Freedom of the Borough in 1949 – he is seen in the photograph below with the Mayor, J.H. (Joseph Harold) Huxley and the Town Clerk at the ceremony.



WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY (1811-1863)
2 Palace Green, W8

The author of *Vanity Fair* briefly lived at this prestigious address from 1861 until his untimely death in 1863, at the age of 52. The house, which is now the Israeli Embassy, stands on one of the grandest and most expensive streets in the world, situated opposite Kensington Palace.

The success of *Vanity Fair* and Thackeray's subsequent other large novels, such as *Pendennis*, *The Newcomes* and *The History of Henry Esmond*, saw his fortunes change from being an impoverished writer and gambler, to a successful businessman and investor. The house at 2 Palace Green was in a poor state in 1860 and Thackeray offered to take it on with a repairing lease. Some felt that it should be rebuilt, but Queen Victoria would not allow any new building opposite the Palace, so Thackeray had to satisfy himself with redesigning the building instead. He went to great lengths to restore it and it is thought to be modelled on the style of Marlborough House. He paid a high price for his prestigious address though, he originally agreed to pay around £1,600 for the repairs, but the dilapidated house required more work than he'd thought and the final bill was £8,000.

His death, from a stroke, was a huge shock to his family and public. It is estimated that over 7,000 people attended his funeral in Kensington Gardens and he was buried in Kensal Green Cemetery.



Sketch by William Railton of Thackeray outside 2 Palace Green



ROBERT BADEN-POWELL (1857-1941) 9 Hyde Park Gate & 32 Princes Gate, SW7

The legendary Lieutenant – General of the British Army, writer and founder of the Scout Movement had many associations in the Borough. Not only did he live at various addresses, the headquarters for the Scouts is still found at Baden Powell House on Queen's Gate.

Baden-Powell was born in 6 Stanhope Terrace (now No.11) in 1857. After his father died in 1860 his family moved to Hyde Park Gate, where he spent most of his childhood. He gained a scholarship to Charterhouse School in 1870, where he had his first introduction to Scouting - as he stalked and cooked game in an out-of-bounds forest near the school, while trying to avoid being caught by teachers. Then he failed to get into Oxford University, so he took exams for the army and won a place in the Cavalry, the 13th Hussars and was posted to India.

Baden-Powell was an Honorary Colonel for the 13th Hussars for 30 years. He travelled around the world establishing himself as an extraordinary soldier. After the defence of the town Mafeking in South Africa in 1899, he became a Major-General aged only 43. It was during this 217 day siege that he established the basis for Scouting. He realised that young boys responded well to challenges and responsibility, and his book *Aids to Scouting* (a military training manual) was published during this time.

When he returned to England in 1903 (he moved into 32 Princes Gate), he discovered that his book was being widely used beyond the army, including by teachers and youth leaders. He was soon persuaded to provide a scheme for training boys and, after he ran an experimental camp on Brownsea Island, Poole, Dorset in 1907, the Scouts were born.

EMMA JUHASZ



REPORTS FROM LOCAL SOCIETIES 2008

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Many thanks to all of you who have contributed this year. The Society has worked with many of the local societies on specific issues in their areas and we hope that they continue in these efforts. These reports are an invaluable insight into the hard work that is undertaken to help maintain Kensington's unique character.

Lexham Gardens Residents Association

Lexham Gardens Residents Association and Garden Committee has had a very busy and successful 2008. We were proud to win two awards for our garden square from the Brighter Kensington Gardens and the London Garden Squares competitions.

We held a very successful garden party on 7 June to which 300 people came, including our guests of honour the Mayor, Cllr Joanna Gardner and our local MP, Sir Malcolm Rifkind.

Kensington Society members are cordially invited to attend our 2009 garden party which will be held on Saturday 13 June 2009 at 3-5 pm.

Finally, we are very pleased that the Leader of the Royal Borough Council, Cllr Merrick Cockell, has confirmed in writing the Council's total opposition to the proposal reported in the Evening Standard that private garden squares should be open to the public.

SIR CYRIL TAYLOR, GBE
Chairman



REPORTS FROM LOCAL SOCIETIES 2008

The Friends of Holland Park

The Royal Borough's proposals to rebuild Holland Park School adjacent to the park is not something we could comment on in terms of the underlying policy itself - indeed our Constitution does not permit us to take such a position. However, we could and did object strongly to the threatened loss of the playground site, the open space to the south of the school and the detrimental impact of the proposed luxury residential development planned in its place. We remain hopeful that if the school is rebuilt, the bulk, design and detailing of the residential block will be improved to reduce its effect on the park.

More recently, the security, tranquillity and integrity of the park have been shown to be at risk from its owner, The Royal Borough. Their draft planning brief for the site of the former Commonwealth Institute, requires the developers to "unite the 'tent' with Holland Park", *improving* (their word) the visual and physical links between the site and the park. There is no advantage to the park or its users in making such changes, only an exceptional benefit to the occupiers of the new residential blocks - one of which will rise above the height of the 'tent', spoiling the skyline view from the park. Any thought of moving the park entrance up to the northern boundary of the Commonwealth Institute site must be firmly opposed.

NICHOLAS HOPKINS

Chairman

REPORTS FROM LOCAL SOCIETIES 2008

Knightsbridge Association

We submitted an application to English Heritage for the listing of five buildings in the Hans Town Conservation Area. They are 39/41 Brompton Road: Lincoln House, Basil Street: the Fire Station and remaining parts of the Underground station in Basil Street and 4a/5 Sloane Street.

We continue to oppose the overuse of the two lawns of the Natural History Museum for commercial purposes, especially London Fashion Week and, in association with other amenity societies, are pressing for a low-key, conservation-led scheme for the development of South Kensington Station.

Exhibition Road is a cross border project, which still lacks the active support of Westminster City Council. We fear that the anticipated reduction in traffic in Exhibition Road, will lead to increased through traffic in residential areas to the east and that the proposed closure of Exhibition Road for street entertainment will result in serious disruption for residents.

In the late summer the opening of an outdoor extension to Harrods' Ladurée Café on the Hans Road/Basil Street junction, led to chaotic traffic conditions and late night noise. The justified reaction of residents was such that ward councillors organised a meeting at the Town Hall to discuss the problem and seek solutions.

Subterranean development is a London wide problem. We welcome the initiative of the Royal Borough in appointing Arup to prepare a Scoping Study, followed by the issue (in October) of a draft Supplementary Planning Document on Subterranean Development.

MICHAEL WRIGHT

Vice Chairman, Chairman of Planning and Conservation Committee

REPORTS FROM LOCAL SOCIETIES 2008

The Boltons Association

The unauthorised demolition this summer of 18 Tregunter Road caused a furore. The building was a striking detached Victorian Italianate villa in the Boltons Conservation Area. It had been empty for a number of years and had been becoming steadily more derelict. The owner had applied for planning permission to demolish the building and replace it with a replica one, together with underground swimming pool etc. The Boltons Association had approached English Heritage about listed status, but to no avail. The Council put the building on its at risk register, refused planning permission to demolish but granted permission for various other works. The owner left the premises to deteriorate and then demolished the building on the grounds that it had become unstable and dangerous.

The Council took Counsel's advice and decided that there was insufficient evidence to prosecute the owner. A new planning application is awaited, for a replica building and underground pool. So it looks as if the owner will get exactly what he wanted all along and the Council has been made to look rather weak and foolish. The Council has launched an internal inquiry to see what lessons can be learned for the future. The Boltons Association has asked whether it can give evidence to the inquiry on the extensive steps taken by residents to preserve the building. Watch this space on what happens in this long running saga.

CALVIN JACKSON

REPORTS FROM LOCAL SOCIETIES 2008

Camden Hill Residents' Association

The Council's proposed plans to demolish and rebuild Holland Park School have again dominated out activities for 2008.

Despite receiving nearly 200 letters of opposition from residents, on the 26 June RBKC's Major Planning Committee granted planning permission for the revised plans – including moving the affordable housing off-site. Despite Mayor Boris Johnson publicly stating he would not allow the sale of school playing fields, he chose not to oppose the sale at Holland Park School.

The cost of the school (currently £72.6 million), plus affordable housing, continues to increase and could easily reach £100 million. However, selling off the southern site playing fields for luxury housing will cover the cost of this project, but this is proving difficult in this present financial climate. There is also concern that RBKC will face legal challenges, having not complied with all the Government's conditions for selling the playing field.

If RBKC had taken more care over its rushed original plan, the new school could now have been built and open. Instead, the Council has spent £7 million of your money (to date) and have nothing to show for it. In the current financial circumstances, 'The Alternative Vision' to rebuild/refurbish the school, that we support, makes even more sense, particularly when there is Government funding available under the Building Schools for the Future program. There is now a window of opportunity for the Council to carry out a comprehensive review, as unanimously recommended by the OSC on Family & Children's Services at their meeting in June 2007.

DAVID WHITE
Chairman



REPORTS FROM LOCAL SOCIETIES 2008

Onslow Neighbourhood Association

South Kensington has been bracing itself for the arrival of the roadmakers from RBKC to put into effect the first stage of the Exhibition Road and South Kensington traffic plan - the unravelling of the one way system around the station. This plan has been devised after a lengthy process of consultation, although some people gained the impression that the plan arrived as a *fait accompli*. It has been hoped by many that this improvement at South Kensington might encourage LUL to look seriously at the many problems that beset the station. However, the new Mayor of London cancelled the proposal to install step free access at the station, a plan put forward by his predecessor. This association, amongst others, wrote to protest, in which we were supported by our MP, by our local councillors and by directors of the three museums of Albertopolis. It is hoped that the new through route for traffic will relieve pressure on Thurloe Street, enabling passengers and pedestrians to board buses more freely and in less danger. This will involve a short walk to the corner of Thurloe Place.



The opposing flows of passengers on the main staircase at South Kensington station remain as dangerous as ever.

The neglect of South Kensington Station is utterly shameful, given that it is the station of choice for three famous museums, Imperial College and three major hospitals and is busy throughout the day, week in week out. Requests to the CEO of TfL to visit the area and see for himself the extent of the problems have been ducked. As a result of negotiation with the Council it is hoped that residents parking hours may be extended into parts of Sunday

in view of the large number of visitors to the area on that day. Equally, we hope that an extended ban on street drinking in this part of the Borough, may resolve the persistent problem of street drinkers congregating on the traffic islands outside the station.

ROGER BARESEL

Chairman

REPORTS FROM LOCAL SOCIETIES 2008

Ladbroke Association

In November following representations by the Association and many others, the original proposal to build nine three-storey houses on the old electricity board site in Victoria Gardens was withdrawn. It is likely that a new proposal to build smaller houses on the site will appear soon. This is a victory of sorts, but the Association remains of the view – not shared unfortunately by RBKC- that nothing should be built on the site until the future of the north side of Notting Hill Gate is decided.

2008 has been a year of consultations: the 228 Bus, closure of Punjani's Post Office in Ladbroke Grove, the North Kensington Action Plan and more. This brings two problems. Firstly, that one does feel too often that a consultation is merely a presentational process to be endured by those in authority. Secondly, finding the time to respond is a very real problem for the Association.

Once again the number of planning applications in our area to be considered has increased and the time scale for response has shortened, so that in some cases the consultation period is shorter than the time between monthly meetings. We are also concerned that the RBKC Planning Department seem to have problems in dealing expeditiously with the load of planning applications.

Our project for putting histories of every street in the Conservation Area on our website: www.ladbrokeassociation.org.uk continues. We are inviting members of the public to send us contributions for these street histories.

DAVID CORSELLIS

Chairman

REPORTS FROM LOCAL SOCIETIES 2008

Victoria Road Area Residents' Association

The credit crunch started to bite in 2008. The first sign of change was the sale by Candy and Candy of the De Vere Gardens development for £320 million to a Middle Eastern developer. There is some uncertainty as to what will happen, but the building is being gutted in readiness for its future use.

The amount of subterranean development granted in the last two years has been worrying. However, not all of this has been built yet, and, in the current economic climate they may not be implemented.

The biggest case this year was the proposal to expand Thomas' School by changing the use of 21 St Alban's Grove (formerly Leith's Cookery School) to educational use and expanding the school to 400 pupils. VRARA opposed this expansion in the number of pupils, but the Council granted consent; subject to a School Travel Plan and a Traffic and Access Management Plan, which would seek to reduce the number of pupils coming by car. We are now working closely with Thomas' School to ensure that this agreement reduces the impact of the school on our neighbourhood.

Progress on our Pilot Ward Initiative to improve Gloucester Road North has been slower than expected. We managed to secure an excellent refurbishment of the Gloucester Arms, but we still need to get the agreement to improve some of the shop fronts. We hope that this will lead to a streetscape scheme involving repaving and new lighting.

PETER DIXON

Chairman

REPORTS FROM LOCAL SOCIETIES 2008

Brompton Association

Some applicants never give up. Transport for London (TfL) is yet again attempting to advance redevelopment at South Kensington tube station. Redevelopment proposals for this site go back to the dark days of the 1960s when whole swathes of historic towns and cities were swept away in the name of comprehensive redevelopment. This mindset lives on at the Property Department of TfL, even though the planning context has significantly changed with the listing of the station in 2004.

Both RBKC and English Heritage have made it clear to TfL the potential for redevelopment is now significantly restricted. Both bodies have also indicated that the Thurloe Street terrace – home to Dacquoise and the Medici shop – should be retained because it makes a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.

Nonetheless, TfL wants to 'test the boundaries' and has issued a planning brief for a 'massing study' to establish a quantum of new development (presumably burying the listed station under several stories of development). Despite almost universal criticism of the brief, TfL is pressing ahead and has now appointed architects John McAslan & Partners. In the current economic climate aspirations for substantial redevelopment seem wholly unrealistic.

TfL's announcement in November that the planned step-free access scheme was shelved due to budgetary constraints was a blow. We will continue to press for this as a priority. This decision seems particularly unfortunate given the Borough is now improving the public realm around the station, a scheme this Association has long encouraged.

Another dogged organisation is the Natural History Museum, which continues to promote a stream of applications for temporary planning permissions for structures on its east lawn. These blight the setting of one of the finest Victorian buildings in the country and deny the public access to an attractive green space. It is time the Council stopped allowing these temporary permissions. Equally, the museum should recognise its responsibility to protect and enhance the museum's setting as Sir Alfred Waterhouse originally intended.

SOPHIE ANDREAE

REPORTS FROM LOCAL SOCIETIES 2008

Norland Conservation Society

2008 has been a year of positive progress.

Positive developments have been the notable successes in contesting unsuitable planning applications by making our case in person to the Planning Applications Committee. Hard-pressed planning officers sometime negotiate with applicants, and in doing so make concessions, in conflict with UDP policies. Thankfully, we are finding that the Planning Applications Committee often agrees with our objections and rejects the officers' recommendations.

In particular, we are fighting ugly glass boxes attached to beautiful Grade II houses, and modernistic developments which simply do not fit in. We have no objection to extensions of modern design, but we are insisting that they should be of excellent design, appropriate to their surroundings.

We are heartened by the Council's Draft SPD on subterranean development. The proposal is to resist subterranean development under listed buildings. However, concerns remain.

New threats include the 316-bus route down St Ann's Villas and Royal Crescent; Westfield shoppers taking advantage of free parking in Norland; the Third Runway, which would make life a noisy misery for the whole of North Kensington: far too big an issue for us, but one on which we support the objectors.

In all our efforts, we are extremely grateful to our Ward Councillors Julie Mills and David Lindsay for their support.

The Norland Conservation Society annual lecture will take place on Wednesday 25 March at 7.30pm in St James Norlands Church, St James's Gardens, on the subject of "The development of the London Mews". All members of The Kensington Society welcome. Tickets £8 on the door.

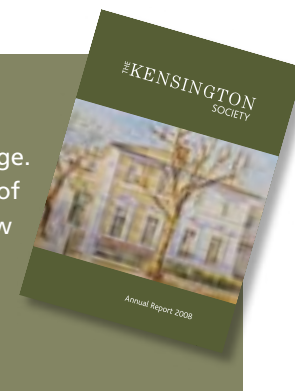
CLIVE WILSON

Chairman

PORTRAIT OF A LOCAL ARTIST

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

While we all know that Kensington has a rich heritage. The Society felt that it should also recognise some of the Borough's present artistic talent. This is a new regular feature for the AGM Report, where we will profile local talent. In this issue, we focus on the watercolourist Clive Wilson.



The following article was written by Clive's wife, Catherine.

Residents of Norland and Kensington may have seen Clive standing at his portable easel, painting the local scene near our home in St James's Gardens – at Clarendon Cross, Addison Avenue (the subject of this year's AGM Report front cover) or Queensdale Road. Clive's life-time love and practice of watercolour began when his mother advised him to take his paint-box to France on a French exchange. While Philippe, the French boy, was endlessly occupied with his holiday 'devoirs', Clive painted the landscape round about. He continued painting at school, under the tuition of Wilfred Blunt and encouraging criticism of Oliver Van Oss (his housemaster), and then at university.

Employed first by Courtaulds and then as a management consultant while his family were growing up, Clive was a Sunday and holiday painter. But from 1994 Clive was able to work for himself as a consultant: this gave him more time to devote to painting. He took courses at the Slade Summer School, the Royal Watercolour Society and Life classes with the New English Art Club at the Royal Academy Schools.

Since then he has become a very accomplished watercolourist, emphasising the subtlety and luminosity of pure watercolour - to many people the most beautiful and expressive of painting media. His work makes the most of the translucency of pure watercolour: the subtle build-up of depth of colour, through successful application of repeated washes, light passing through pigment and reflecting back from the paper, each adding a little more richness to the tone.

‘Pure watercolour gives the ability to capture the fleeting qualities of light and atmosphere, and his jewel-like colours shine through his paintings.’



Many contemporary painters have lost this unique quality of watercolour and have been seduced by the bolder covering quality of acrylics and gouache. Pure watercolour - letting the paint surprise - is more interesting to Clive: as he says “we don’t all have to try to imitate oil painting...”

He is above all a painter of atmosphere, temperature and light. Pure watercolour gives the ability to capture the fleeting qualities of light and atmosphere, and his jewel-like colours shine through his paintings.

His charming (and sometimes humorous) subjects with their lively figures, his street scenes, architectural views, as well as landscapes have made Clive’s work much appreciated and collected. As a conservationist and co-founder (with Gordon Michell) of the Norland Conservation Society 40 years ago, he delights in architecture and his sense of the urban-scape, which is reflected in his paintings.

On Clive’s painting trips he often has to cope with the crowds of onlookers - monks in Cambodia gather round to watch him at work, while children like to swing on his easel in India, Sri Lanka and Morocco. One little German girl in Venice, seeing him painting by a canal, decided he must be a starving artist and came up to give

him twenty lira (these were the days before the Euro). When Clive said that he was ‘quite all right, thank you very much’, the little girl was unconvinced and insisted “doch, doch” (*you must take it*). People’s reactions to the artist at his easel in the street vary: one grand, very upper-class English lady, walking past Clive at work in front of the Gritti Palace Hotel in Venice, turned to her husband and said “Oh Arthur, do you see the easel that man is using? Shall we ask him where he got it? It would be just right for Charles.” She then approached Clive and said very loudly and slowly, enunciating clearly so that a native could understand: “Could...you...tell...me...where...you...found...that...easel?” Clive replied swiftly, “Greene and Stone on the King’s Road *actually*”, astonishing the couple, who were not expecting to hear such a familiar accent coming from a rather shabby-looking artist. He is unbothered by this kind of attention, but being surrounded by five armed guards with machine guns, cocked and ready for action in Egypt, was not inspirational!

Clive’s work appears in collections not only in this country, but in the USA, France, Sweden, Holland and Portugal. He often exhibits in London: including his many one-man exhibitions at the Ebury Galleries and a one-man show at Frost & Reed. His work figures regularly in the mixed exhibitions in aid of Venice in Peril and in galleries outside London. He has had many private commissions: visit his website www.clive-wilson.com for further information.



All pictures courtesy of Clive Wilson

EVENTS HIGHLIGHT 2008

Picture courtesy Sphinx Fine Art



William Frith,
Poverty and Wealth
(1888)

While Clive Wilson represents just some of the artistic talent that can be found in Kensington today, The Society discovered another local talent from the Victorian era on an events outing to the Government Art Collection last year. The painter, William Powell Frith (1819-1909) was born in Yorkshire but lived in London – and for a time at Chepstow Villas, where it is said that he lived with his family, while his mistress and other children lived around the corner.

The Government Art Collection own *The Crossing Sweeper* (1893), which shows a young boy offering to sweep the road ahead for a young, well-dressed lady. Frith repainted this popular image throughout his career, changing the fashion of the lady's dress to keep up the times, as he knew it would sell. Like his friend Charles Dickens, Frith was interested in social inequality, a previously unexplored theme in art and one that had only been seen in publications such as *Punch*. His work featured the daily lives of not just the elite but people from all social classes.

He was an incredibly popular artist and on further investigation The Society has discovered his work at Sphinx Fine Art on Kensington Church Street. The gallery has various paintings by Frith, including *Poverty and Wealth* (1888) - pictured - which shows a London street scene crowded with figures, rich and poor, whom Frith draws vivid parallels between, from one side to the other.

The Society hopes to uncover further local gems at its events planned for 2009 – so sign up now!

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR 2009

Eton College & Savill Garden, Windsor

Wednesday 13 May 2009

Eton was founded by Henry VI in 1440. There will be a tour of the historic buildings including School Yard, Lower and Upper Schools, College Hall, Cloisters and Museum of Eton Life.

Followed by a visit to the Savill Garden for lunch at the Garden Cafe (at own expense) and a guided tour of the fine woodland and ornamental garden; a riot of colour, from magnolias azaleas, rhododendrons and camellias, plus formal gardens of long herbaceous borders.

Depart by coach 9.45am from Kensington Square:

£37 per person

Fulham Palace, Bishop's Avenue SW6

Tuesday 7 July 2009

This was the residence of the Bishops of London from c700 - 1973.

We shall visit the 13 acre grounds and Grade 1 listed building with a mix of architectural styles - Tudor, Georgian and Victorian recently restored to its old grandeur. The visit to the museum will be followed by tea and biscuits.

Meet at the above address at 2.15pm:

£15 per person

Admiralty House

Thursday 8 October 2009

We will walk round 26 Whitehall, behind the Adam Screen. The former Headquarters of the Admiralty and home to many fine paintings and objects from the Ministry of Defence Art Collection - normally hidden from public view. The tour will be led by the MOD Art Collections Curator, who will place the objects in their architectural, naval and personal context.

Meet at the above address at 5pm:

£15 per person including wine

RESERVATIONS

To reserve a place, please send cheques for each event to:

The Kensington Society, c/o Mrs G Foley, 34 Kelso Place, LONDON W8 5QP

Cheques are to be payable to The Kensington Society. Please enclose a self addressed envelope and give your contact telephone number.

Tickets will be sent giving full instructions.

Guests are always welcome at any of these events.

LICENSING REPORT 2008

The unfortunate combination of extended hours under the new licensing laws and the smoking ban continues to cause problems for local residents when noisy patrons congregate outside pubs, bars and restaurants late into the evening and on into the early hours.

However, the Council has been taking significant steps to combat the problem. The Licensing Team has had some notable successes in persuading licence holders to agree to voluntary conditions to limit noise levels (e.g. outside space is seating room only) on the understanding that if the measures are effective, the license holder will subsequently apply to vary the license and put the voluntary conditions on a formal footing.

Alternatively, a licence can be called in for review (eg by Council's Noise Nuisance Team or residents themselves) in which case tough conditions may be imposed by the Licensing Committee (e.g. to preclude alcohol from being drunk outside after, say, 10pm). It should be noted that there is a right of appeal to the Magistrates Court.

One of the biggest challenges going forward will be dealing with the noise which is created by patrons who step outside for a late night smoke, even if they are not allowed to have a drink in-hand. Unless measures are taken to control numbers and noise levels (e.g. by proactive door staff), local residents will, sadly, continue to be disturbed.

ANTHONY LEE

If residents experience problems, complaints can be made to the:
Council's Licensing Team: 0207 341 5152

– or –

Council's Noise Nuisance Team: 0207 361 3484 (out of hours)

NB. Diaries noting times, dates and responses by both the Council and the publican should also be kept; so that they can be referred to if evidence is required.

CASINO REPORT 2008



Two proposals for new casinos in the Royal Borough, each opposed by The Kensington Society, will not now be developed.

Plans to build a £20 million casino at the Earls Court Exhibition Centre have been rejected for the second time. Planning inspector Roger Brown turned down an appeal from the Earls Court and Olympia Group, which wanted to build an extension to the current exhibition centre to house the casino, saying it would disrupt life for local people and that the traffic caused by the casino could have caused "unacceptable noise and disturbance for neighbours".

In September 2008 the developers of 99-121 Kensington High Street withdrew their application for a Change of Use of the fifth floor from an office, to a gaming facility with restaurant and bar - with associated internal and external alterations. The development, known as Derry and Tom's, had been opposed by the Kensington Square Residents Association and The Kensington Society since the application was first registered in 2006.

CHARLES LUTYENS

The Kensington Society Accounts

Receipts and payments for the year Ended 31 December 2008

1. General Core Fund

	2008 £	2007 £
Receipts		
Voluntary Sources		
Subscriptions	6,302.10	4,967.10
Donations	1,460.00	380.00
Gift Aid	0.00	404.70
Receipts from current year visits	1,248.00	160.00
Advertising in annual report	300.00	450.00
Interest	1972.86	2,112.45
Total receipt	<u>11,282.96</u>	<u>8,474.25</u>
Payments		
Direct Charitable Expenditure		
Charitable Activities	300.00	552.97
Campaigning	0.00	2,000.00
Visits	681.95	140.00
Deposits for 2008 activities	0.00	1,875.00
	<u>981.95</u>	<u>4,567.97</u>
Other Expenditure		
Annual report	5,970.85	4,818.50
Stationery / printing	923.18	1,370.06
Postage / telephones	0.00	508.52
Typing & Admin.	76.00	175.00
Meeting room hire	100.00	121.25
Subscriptions	20.00	142.00
Catering	568.94	876.93
Accounts	475.00	475.00
Bank charges	0.00	206.19
Insurance 2008	0.00	288.75
Insurance 2009	0.00	288.75
Advertising	180.00	180.00
	<u>8,313.97</u>	<u>9,450.95</u>
Total payments	<u>9,295.92</u>	<u>14,018.92</u>
Net receipts for the year	1,987.04	(5,544.67)
Bank balances B/F	45,098.34	50,643.01
Bank balances C/F	<u>47,085.38</u>	<u>45,098.34</u>

The Kensington Society Accounts

Statement of assets & liabilities at 31 December 2008

	Princess Alice Memorial Fund £	General Core Fund £	2008 Total £	2007 Total £
Monetary Assets				
High interest deposit account	0.00	2.32	2.32	2.32
National Savings Account	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Current Account General Core Fund	0.00	4,286.65	4,286.65	4,272.47
CAF Cash Account	<u>2,370.41</u>	<u>40,426.00</u>	<u>42,796.65</u>	<u>40,823.55</u>
	<u>2,370.41</u>	<u>44,714.97</u>	<u>47,085.38</u>	<u>45,098.34</u>

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Society came through 2008 with improved cash reserves at £47,085.38. Subscription revenue was up on 2007, as was the revenue from the events which Gill Foley organised throughout the year. We also received a number of generous donations.

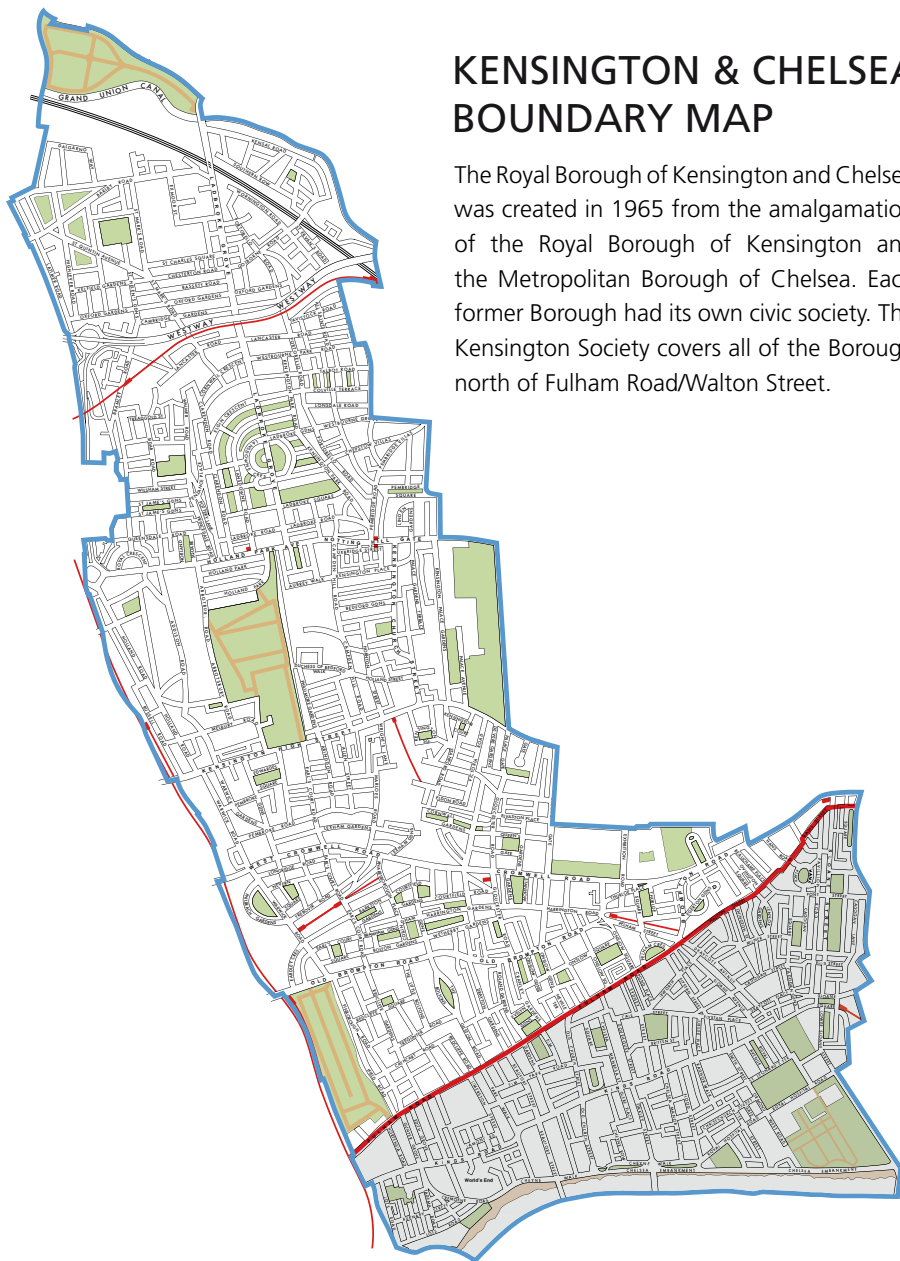
In order to keep up with our costs, which have been increasing steadily year on year, we took the decision to increase our annual subscription from £10 to £15. We would therefore be grateful if existing members would ensure that they are up-to-date with their 2009 subscription.

ANTHONY LEE

CONSTITUTION

The constitution appears on the Society's website:
www.kensingtonsociety.org

Alternatively copies can be obtained from:
The Hon Secretary, 12 Princedale Road, London W11 4NJ



KENSINGTON & CHELSEA BOUNDARY MAP

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea was created in 1965 from the amalgamation of the Royal Borough of Kensington and the Metropolitan Borough of Chelsea. Each former Borough had its own civic society. The Kensington Society covers all of the Borough north of Fulham Road/Walton Street.