



The Hammersmith Society

Newsletter – August 2007

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Canal Trip – Brentford where the Thames and Grand Union Canal Meet to Perivale Sunday 9 September starting at mid-day. For details see below.

Garden Opera in Ravenscourt Park.. Friday 14 September at 6.30pm. Performance of Puccini's La Boheme. Tickets are £20 from David Walton on 020 8748 5961.

THE HAMMERSMITH SOCIETY ENVIRONMENT AWARDS 2007

The winner of the Society's the 2007 Environment Awards was announced and the Award presented at the recent AGM to 31 Vernon Street Offices W14. This is part of the redevelopment of the former West London Magistrates Court. The original Edwardian brick Court building has been retained and restored. The former yard and cell block at the rear have been demolished and replaced with this very contemporary office building in white stone and glass. The offices are let to a number of companies specialising in IT and TV work. It was designed by Terry Pawson Architects for their client Thomas Gatacre.

This project and Jasmine Studios (which was our Nancye Goulden Winner last year (and venue for the 2007 AGM) were both winners of RIBA London Region Awards. Where Hammersmith Society leads, the RIBA follows !

Other schemes that were shortlisted for the Hammersmith Society Award were:

- The refurbished and restored shopfronts at 113-129 Shepherds Bush Road
- Fine restoration of the large semi-detached private house at 300 Goldhawk Road
- Threshold Housing Association housing scheme on south side of Westway
- Jack Tizard School

No award was made this year for either the Nancye Goulden Award or for the Jane Mercer Award for Co-operation, Collaboration and Consultation as the Committee did not feel there were appropriate schemes to be given either award.

A Wooden Spoon Award was however given to the many owners, tenants and the Council's Planning Enforcement Department for the dismal state of Dorville Row in King Street. These buildings are among the oldest in Hammersmith and are on the Local Register of Buildings of Merit/Historic Interest. Through lack of development control - even though they are almost opposite the Town Hall - and unauthorised alterations, signs, windows etc. the original character is all but lost.

CANAL TRIP – Sunday 9 September

This year's canal trip on 'Elsdale II' will enable us to complete the missing portion of our journeys on the Grand Union Canal/Regents Canal between Camden Town, where it passes through our Borough and where it meets the Thames at Brentford. It is a slightly faster boat than we have been on before so we are able to travel a bit further. The start this time will be 12 noon at Brentford Gauging Lock on Brentford High Street. (267 bus from Hammersmith Broadway)

Along the route we will travel through Osterley Park, up the Hanwell Flight of locks (11 locks to do in total and help in working the locks gates will be welcomed and part of the enjoyment), to Three Bridges where road, rail and canal all intersect in a remarkable piece of engineering, Bulls Bridge, past Horsenden Hill and through Perivale Wood (which boasts 70 species of birds) to finish at Perivale where we started last year (a 10 minute walk to Perivale Central Line station).

There will once again be a commentary from both Del Brenner, Secretary of the Regents Canal Network, a great canal expert and enthusiast, and John Goodier of the Hammersmith and Fulham Historic Buildings Group (HBG) with whom we are joining for this trip.

Tickets will be £15 per person. Bring your own lunch/drinks etc. Bookings can be made to Melanie Whitlock by sending a cheque payable to the Hammersmith Society to 38 Ashchurch Grove W12 8BU. She can be contacted **after 16 August** on 020 8743 1391 or by email to: whitlockmelanie@hotmail.com

MEETING WITH RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS

In May, the Hammersmith Society hosted a meeting to which representatives of all local Residents' Associations were invited to talk about issues in common. Issues discussed included planning controls in conservation areas, parking, front garden treatment and visitor parking, greening our neighbourhood. It was agreed to try and get the Council to reissue its individual Conservation Area guidelines to affected residents and also to provide copies to new residents of properties when they register to pay Council Tax on moving in. Residents' association representatives also agreed to put regular reminders into their own newsletters where all or part of their area is within a Conservation Area. The Council needed also to be requested to address the planning issues around solar panels and wind turbines.

'Adopt a Street Tree' was also raised – it costs the Council £150 to plant each new street tree and £48 a year to maintain. If residents are willing to undertake to water new street trees, particularly in their first year, the Council could afford to plant many more. Anyone interested should contact the Council's Arboricultural Officer, Gavin Simmonds, on 020 8748 3020.

It was generally agreed that all Residents' groups would try and disseminate information between them through, for example, exchange of newsletters and further meetings be held every six months hosted by the Hammersmith Society

LATEST NEWS

Uxbridge Road/West London Tram

Both Hammersmith Against the Tram (HATT) and Save Shepherds Bush Streets (SSBS) have been working hard and holding public meetings to continue the campaign against the Mayor's continuing wish to build the Uxbridge Road tram. Much work will be involved ahead of a public enquiry, although this has now been postponed by a year. The three Borough Councils along the route are also working together to defeat the Mayor's plans.

Meanwhile at Mayor's Question time on 18 July, Ken Livingstone said that he was minded to pursue the Cross River (Camden-Waterloo-Peckham) tram ahead of the West London one, as the affected boroughs support the Cross River tram. The Mayor might instead go for bus priorities/improvements on the

Uxbridge Road which have been proposed by the London Borough of Ealing as an alternative to the unpopular tram. It would make sense to see what impact better buses and Crossrail would have on traffic before going ahead with the tram, he insisted. He would then look at the need for the West London tram in about 2015. The significance of 2015 is that Crossrail may have been built by then. Perhaps he is beginning to listen as one of the points which the Hammersmith Society has made is that Crossrail will make the tram largely redundant. If the project does go ahead it will be at huge cost in both financial terms and the effect on nearby communities and local businesses along the route. On BBCTV's Question Time Ken Livingstone also indicated he may be willing to ditch the West London tram if Crossrail is approved by the Government. Meanwhile lobbying will continue and nothing taken for granted.

Town Hall CarPark Site

A development brief has gone out and 17 developers have been long-listed to submit bids for re-developing the site which includes not only the carpark site but the Friends Meeting House, cinema, the flats on the east side of Cromwell Avenue and the careers office at 181-187 King Street. There are various options for a mixed use development to provide new civic office accommodation and to be either housing or retail led. Your committee welcome the proposed demolition of the present Town Hall extension and the creation of a new public square will be created in its place, opening up the views of the fine art deco facade of the original Town Hall building. Two meetings have now been held with local residents and other local groups, which Hammersmith Society committee members have attended. Concerns have been raised by many people and groups as to the appropriate rehousing of the current tenants of the Cromwell Mansions flats. There is also a wish to see a new cinema in the scheme but this may be affected by what happens on the Beadon Road site (see below)

NCP Car Park Beadon Road

This site which is owned by Transport for London (TfL) has been ripe for redevelopment for many years and indeed a scheme was put forward a few years ago but did not progress far! Now TfL has appointed Development Securities as its development partner who have prepared a scheme for the site. Representatives of the Society have now had 3 meetings with them to discuss the scheme. It does have some merits as it includes public open space to link across Beadon Road with Lyric Square, an Everyman cinema and restaurants. However, while recognising that any development on that site is likely to be a large one, the office building being proposed, we believe is just too big – and has variously been described as looking more like a space ship, the front of a TGV train or just too 'bloated'. Both the Society and the Historic Buildings Group hope that the developers will review their proposals in the light of these views prior to seeking planning permission.

Lyric Square Market

The Committee will continue to press the Council for the re-introduction of daily market stalls (six were planned for in the design scheme for the new square) despite the fact that a Saturday market has now been introduced in addition to the Thursday Farmers' Market.

Allied Carpets Site

We understand that a new developer has come forward with outline plans, which apparently at this stage are not very different to those previously turned down on appeal last year. We will be watching this space carefully!

282-288 Goldhawk Road

The Council is planning to redevelop the now empty former residential care home and adjoining block of Council flats on this site. A meeting was recently held with residents to discuss suitable uses for the site which the Council appear currently to be considering for mixed use housing. In view of where this site located, its design and height will be extremely important; it is also hoped that the many mature trees and the existing substantial beech hedge can be retained.

uPVC Windows

The Society has campaigned for many years to stop the replacement of wooden sash windows with those made of uPVC which do not preserve or enhance the character of Conservation Areas. This is supported by policy EN8F of the Council's Unitary Development Plan (UDP) which states that 'inappropriate replacement windows can have a particularly damaging effect on the appearance of a property and the general street scene. This is particularly apparent where the property forms part of a terrace...and the uniformity of window design is lost'.

The problem has arisen that where properties are not actually in a Conservation Area but are close by (or even just the other side of the road!) where there are less strict rules but the effect is equally unfortunate. The Council Housing Department and Housing Associations are keen to replace windows with uPVC ones as they say they are cheaper and more durable. It is important to note however that uPVC windows are not sustainable in their production, and contrary to myth do require maintenance after a while as plastic degrades.

There is currently a planning application to install uPVC windows in Cathnor Road, which the Society and many others is opposing as it will anywhere where we regard such changes as inappropriate and against the Council's own policies.

Local Development Framework

The current UDP will shortly be replaced by a Local Development Framework (LDF) and the Council has been consulting on both its Core Strategy Preferred Options and its Preferred Options for Site Specific Allocations. By the time this newsletter reaches you, the Committee will have submitted a response to these consultations; if you are interested in seeing what we have said do let us know and we will send you a copy – preferably by email! This is only one stage in the process towards an Examination in Public being held on the proposed LDF in the autumn of 2008.

The London Plan

The London Plan has also been subject to an Examination in Public at which the Hammersmith Society has been represented by our past Chairman, Michael McDermott, and by Peter Eversden, Chairman of the London Forum of Civic and Amenity Societies. Angela Dixon also represented us via the West London River Group (of which the Hammersmith Society is a member) seeking (and we hope achieving) some improvements to the wording on the Plan's Blue Ribbon Policies relating to the Thames and canals.

The aspects of the Plan of particular concern to the Hammersmith Society have been CAZ/Town Centre and Transport to bring a specific West London perspective to both of these areas of policy making and the protection of the Blue Ribbon Network, which provides policies to preserve the environment of both the Thames and the Grand Union Canal.

News by email

From time to time we communicate with members by email. Please therefore make sure we have your email address (if you have one) to ensure you don't miss out on the latest news. Please let our Hon Secretary, Melanie Whitlock, have your email address at whitlockmelanie@hotmail.com

Membership

We welcome a number of new members to the Society – but look forward to increasing our membership further. A new leaflet about the Society has recently been produced. A copy is enclosed – please do give it to a friend or neighbour – and ask us for more if you know other people who might be interested!

Subscriptions

Have you already paid your subscription for 2007?. If you pay annually by cheque and have not yet done so please could you send yours made payable to the Hammersmith Society to Julian Hillman, 19 Flanchford Road, London, W12 9ND.

Subscription rates are:

£15 for organizations - £6 for families or couples - £5 for individuals - £3 concessions
(seniors, students, unwaged)

Thank you to those who pay by standing order as it makes our Hon Treasurer's job so much easier!