

# The Hammersmith Society

## Newsletter October 2017



**KINGS HOUSE, 174, HAMMERSMITH ROAD, LONDON W6**  
**Winner of the 2017 Environment Main Award**

King's House was formerly the site of the King's Theatre demolished in 1963 to make way for the headquarters of the Haymarket Publishing Group. The latest redevelopment is an unusually fine and distinguished office building, modest in height, beautifully detailed and in keeping with its location within the Brook Green Conservation Area.    Developer: Kier Property                                  Architect: T P Bennett

AGM \* 2017 ENVIRONMENT AWARDS \* TOWN HALL REDEVELOPMENT \* CYCLE  
SUPERHIGHWAY \* TRIANGLE \* OPDC \* LANDMARK HOUSE \* OLYMPIA \* WHITE  
CITY \* HELICOPTER NOISE \* PARKS COMMISSION \* FAST TRACK PLANNING \*  
CAPABILITY BROWN STATUE \* WILLIAM MORRIS STATUE \* DIMES PLACE \*  
LAMBDA \* TOWN CENTRE RESIDENTS GROUP AND MASTERPLAN \* AND MORE.....

## EDITORIAL

Welcome to the October 2017 Newsletter. This has been a mixed year for the Hammersmith Society, with an encouraging array of Environment Award nominations and some disappointments. The Hammersmith Town Hall redevelopment into which so many local societies threw their energy has been abandoned, although a new and possibly even better scheme is now being developed. The Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC) to which the Hammersmith Society has made lengthy and onerous submissions has approved proposals far in excess of their Master Plan, whilst not securing the level of affordable housing required by London Mayor, Sadiq Khan.

The Hammersmith Society continues to scrutinise larger planning applications, make considered submissions to LBHF Planners and monitor applications' progress, and has succeeded in influencing the design of many significant schemes. This year's AGM at the Dorsett Hotel, our next item, was a resounding success, and the unveiling of the Capability Brown statue supported by the Society took place in front of a large crowd of local people.

We are sorry that Rosemary Pettit has stepped down from the Committee. We thank her for all her energy, hard work and wise counsel on the Committee, particularly as Chairman and Membership Secretary. We wish her all the best in her role as Mayoress and welcome Richard Farthing and Chris Tranchell to the Committee.

We are particularly grateful to our chairman, Tom Ryland, who has worked tirelessly on our behalf and provided us with frequent email newsletters. Our thanks also go to all those who have given invaluable advice and made contributions to the Newsletter. The Committee works closely together as a team, pooling information and attending meetings and presentations. If you would like to be involved in furthering the work of the Society, please contact our Chairman Tom Ryland, at email: [tomryland@cparchitects.com](mailto:tomryland@cparchitects.com). News updates can be found on our website [www.hammersmithsociety.wordpress.com/](http://www.hammersmithsociety.wordpress.com/)

*Richard Jackson*

## THE HAMMERSMITH SOCIETY AGM – 21 JUNE 2016

The Dorsett Hotel, for the second year, generously hosted our AGM the only cost to the Society being for the wine which they charged at half price. The meeting began with a one minute silence for the Grenfell Tower victims. Derrick Wright gave an illustrated run through of the Environment Award and Wooden Spoon nominations, and announced the winners. Numbers of members present were down on previous years (almost certainly down to the hottest June day for 40 years). The awards were presented by Cllr Michael Cartwright, Mayor of Hammersmith and Fulham.

We were fortunate this year to have as a speaker Henry Peterson, who gave a brief and excellent resume of the current planning process and problems experienced with the Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC). Henry then explained the process of the application for an Old Oak Neighbourhood Forum which has been the subject of public consultation but is receiving a frosty reception from OPDC despite being Government policy under the Localism Act.

## **20, ST JAMES STREET, W6**

**Environment Awards - Joint Winner of The Nancye Goulden Award for Smaller Schemes**



20, St James Street is a rather quirky but original conversion and extension of the former Church of England St. Mark's into offices. These currently house the headquarters of the Maggie's Centres and a sales office for the flats in the nearby Riverside Studios development.

The observatory with its automated telescope, (and which was part of the original design) was made in Jackson, Mississippi and shipped from New Orleans. Developer and Architects: Michael Dunning and Elizabeth Swainston

## **HAMMERSMITH TOWN HALL REDEVELOPMENT**

Most of you cannot have failed to notice that the former Cineworld cinema has been demolished leaving us with no local cinema and a large hole next to the Town Hall. All work has now stopped and you should have received the explanatory letter dated 31 August 2017 from Cllr Steve Cowan. The demise of the last Town Hall scheme is indeed a disappointment to all of us that worked so hard to get a scheme that most of us could subscribe to. It might not have been perfect but it was a huge improvement on the previous scheme that most of us hated and became to focus of the Save Our Skyline Campaign. The brief for the new scheme is now in the process of being assembled with a team of resident advisors. We understand that at the completion of that stage there will be wider public involvement/consultation. We are also assured that a cinema (or cinema complex) is part of the brief and there have been initial and positive discussions with a cinema provider.

## **THE HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM LOCAL PLAN**

The Council's Plan went to 'Examination in Public' back in June. From that the Government appointed Inspector prompted a number of suggestions, to which the Council put forward some amended proposals on which they have now consulted. For the most part these were minor alterations, in particular strengthening conservation policies which we could endorse. The resultant Plan will now be finalised and put forward firstly to the Council's Cabinet and then the Council as a whole for approval before it is adopted early next year. You can read the latest draft on the Council's website [www.lbhf.gov.uk/LocalPlan](http://www.lbhf.gov.uk/LocalPlan)

## CYCLE SUPERHIGHWAY CS9

The proposed Cycle Superhighway CS9 is from Kensington to Brentford and will run through the town centres of Hammersmith and Chiswick and potentially involve the largest change to the street layout of these areas in recent years. Transport for London (TfL) who are promoting and consulting on the scheme will potentially drive it through unless there is a ground swell of opinion against the scheme. **It is therefore most important that you express your views before the deadline of 31 October 2017.**

Details of the scheme including several images and how to comment can be found at: [consultations@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:consultations@tfl.gov.uk) In addition, there is one remaining local consultation exhibition, which will be held on Sunday 22 October in Ravenscourt Park. 11am – 3pm, adjacent to the café.

The Hammersmith Society will be writing with our objections. Our view is that while supporting the principle of improving cycling facilities, **this is not the right scheme** as it will have a very damaging effect on King Street, Hammersmith Road and Chiswick High Road as a whole and specifically for other road users, buses and pedestrians.

Our main points of concern are:

- It does not seem that there is proven need for such a drastic scheme along this route.
- Cycle Superhighways encourage high speed relatively long-distance commuter cycling and would be of no benefit to a town centre such as King Street which is already struggling.
- High speed cycling can be very intimidating to pedestrians and other slower cyclists.
- The main 'high street' section of King Street including its pavements is already very narrow. The scheme will involve further restrictions to footway widths for pedestrians and road widths for buses and traffic generally. There will be no allowance for stopping off, breakdowns or emergencies, deliveries and parking in King Street. This will affect both users and traders.
- The slowed or stationary traffic will lead to an increase in pollution levels.
- Some bus lanes will be removed and bus stops relocated, sometimes onto 'traffic islands', which will be intimidating for users, particularly the frail or elderly and users with pushchairs, and the closing off and restricted use of some turnings off King Street (eg. British Grove) will be disruptive to local residents and businesses, and are often quite impractical.
- The existing bicycle contraflow in King Street does cause problems to cycle users and pedestrians but as an alternative to the two-way Cycle Superhighway, it could be retained (as a 'Quietway') and extended for the rest of King Street and onto the Broadway.
- Use of the other roads (eg. Glenthorne or Blacks Road) and the wide pavement adjacent to the A4 must be considered.
- The Cycle Superhighway should not be bulldozed through as an end in itself but should be considered in conjunction with the long-term reorganisation of the Broadway and King Street which, although part of the Local Plan, seems to have been kicked into the long grass.

**This scheme must be re-thought: Please make your views known!**



## **QUEEN CAROLINE ESTATE, W6 – CLIMATE PROOFING PROJECT**

### **Environment Awards - Joint Winner of the Nancye Goulden Award for Smaller Projects**



The Climate Proofing Project is a wide-ranging project in its ambitions and is one of three involving west London housing estates. It aims to demonstrate the increasingly important role that climate proofing can play in our cities' resilience to climate change. Developer: LBHF Architect: Groundwork London

### **THE TRIANGLE SITE**

In a surprise move the Council's Planning and Development Committee recently turned down the latest application by the developer Fulham based Romulus. This site is properly known as 5-17 Hammersmith Grove and 1-11 Britannia House: 3 and 3A Hammersmith Grove and 12-18 Beadon Road, London W6. There have been a number of proposals since 2013.

We and other local groups have found each of these schemes unacceptable. Fortunately, the Council have agreed with us and refused permission. This included a scheme in 2015, which became the subject of an Appeal by the developers, due to have been heard at a Public Enquiry in March of this year. However, the appointed Inspector postponed the hearings at the last moment for personal reasons, but no new date has been arranged.

In the meantime, Romulus, together with their architects Allies and Morrison, have submitted a new application. Although they have overcome one of our major objections by moving their building frontage on Hammersmith Grove back to the line of the existing building, we find the latest proposals are otherwise little improved on the previous schemes. We shall now await the next move which hopefully could still result in an improved scheme

### **HAMMERSMITH TOWN CENTRE RESIDENTS GROUP AND MASTERPLAN**

There has not been a Residents' Advisory Group meeting since June, and the Grimshaw Masterplan proposals are being scrutinised by another consultancy, Peter Brett Associates. The council are awaiting the outcome before the Group meet again. The intention is that from the Masterplan, a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will be prepared and adopted as an adjunct to the Local Plan.

## **THE OAK AND PARK ROYAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (OPDC) REVISED LOCAL PLAN**

The Society made detailed comments to the OPDC on its Revised Draft Local Plan, for its deadline in September. Many of our objections centred on the extremely high housing density levels envisaged (exceeding London Plan densities) and a lack of transparency over the heights needed to achieve those levels. The Plan includes the unrealistic targets of 25,500 new homes and 65,000 new jobs. We argue that these can only be achieved by excessive over-development in terms of density and building heights which will mitigate against what are otherwise commendable objectives. The Plan is unspecific about heights and it requires a search through one of the many supporting documents to find references of up to 40 storeys. We also consider that the plan is not ambitious enough in terms of its potential offering for arts and culture.

The OPDC Planning Committee, anxious to prove the OPDC area to be a success, has given uncritical approval to every major application which comes before it, meaning that the most readily buildable residential plots around the edges of the area (eg. Scrubs Lane) will see a fringe of inappropriately tall buildings of around 20-22 storeys and with no design merit.

Granting of planning permission is hailed as a contribution to solving London's housing crisis whereas in actual fact much of the new housing proposed is student housing (in the north Acton cluster) or unaffordable to Londoners. Meanwhile both the OPDC and the H&F Planning Committees blocked the well-prepared application for an Old Oak Neighbourhood Forum by changing the Neighbourhood boundaries and then claiming the Neighbourhoods unviable. In our view it means that existing and future residents of the OPDC area will not have an opportunity to shape their local area or democratic voice in the ongoing development, which is a deplorable state of affairs.

### **LANDMARK HOUSE, BLACKS ROAD W6**

The controversial revised scheme, reported in our April 2017 Newsletter, has now been approved by the Council's Planning Committee. The concern is that the 22 storey height of this scheme could provide a precedent for taller buildings in the Town Centre in advance of the final Town Centre Masterplan.

But it is the Society's view that the final scheme by architects Rogers, Stirk, Harbour + Partners for Eastern and Oriental Properties will be a fine building and a credit to Hammersmith. Preparatory work on site will commence early next year.

### **OLYMPIA AND HAMMERSMITH ROAD**

There are interesting developments at the eastern end of Hammersmith Road. We await a briefing on new proposals for the Olympia exhibition site, now under new ownership. The designer Thomas Heatherwick has been appointed to develop ideas to boost its attractiveness as a venue. On the former Cadby Hall site, we have looked at preliminary proposals for new offices at 66 Hammersmith Road and 68 Hammersmith Road (Harrods Headquarters Building). Watch this space.

## **THE BUSH THEATRE, UXBRIDGE ROAD, W12**

### **Environment Awards - Winner of The Conservation Award**



Although the work done recently on the Bush Theatre involved more than just conservation, the Committee felt that the whole of the Bush Theatre project deserves an award. The modernisation and conversion, including a wheelchair entrance and garden terrace on the west side, has ensured that the building is now fully functional and more flexible whilst retaining its informality and the eccentricities of the original building.

Developer: Bush Theatre

Architect: Haworth Tomkins

## **WHITE CITY**

John Lewis at Westfield is nearly complete, and work on the housing blocks on its west side is well underway. A start has been made on St James White City immediately north of Westfield, and the additional Imperial development on the former Dairy Crest site between St James and Westway.

We have examined landscaping proposals for the part of the St James scheme which already has detailed planning permission. The plans, by Murdoch Wickham, offers a very high quality public realm with interesting planting, good trees and attractive rills and water play features in the area just north of the Hammersmith & City Line viaduct arches, through which it will be possible to walk to Westfield. Imperial is developing a masterplan which would include residential, offices or laboratory blocks, a linear open space, and a 32-storey tower; and there will also be a much-needed pedestrian underpass link to North Kensington. Eventually there should be pedestrian routes from Westfield through these developments, to the Imperial campus north of Westway. Beside Westway, Imperial's 34 storey tower - love it or hate it - nears completion.

## **NEXT DOOR APP**

The intention of the Nextdoor App is to allow residents to connect with neighbours, plan events and share recommendations. It also provides the community with a forum to discuss local crime and safety issues with the neighbourhood watch and local police.

LBHF are signed up and hope to use the App to provide a platform for local services, helping them to engage with the community and enabling them to work more effectively with local residents.

## **QUEEN'S WHARF/RIVERSIDE STUDIOS**

The scheme is now largely built and many of the flats occupied. In May, the riverside walk was completed and opened, thus avoiding the previous detour away from the river. The Riverside Studios part of the scheme is now being fitted out with initial opening scheduled for April 2018, and overall completion due by the end of the summer. In July the Society organised a site visit to see the studios fitting out and those present were impressed.

When complete there will be three replacement studio/theatre spaces and a cinema, each the same size as previously, two restaurants and considerably enlarged foyer spaces.

## **HOXTON HOTEL**

This is the hotel scheme designed to replace the building that housed the Shepherd's Bush Post Office next to the Dorsett Hotel on the west side of Shepherd's Bush Green. The scheme was covered in detail in our April Newsletter. Although we thought there was room for improvements to the detail of the scheme, it has recently been approved by the Council's Planning Development Committee.

## **HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM AIR QUALITY COMMISSION**

We were pleased to be able to submit evidence to the Commission and welcomed the publication of the final report and recommendations in November which was adopted by the Council. Congratulations to Rosemary Pettit and her team. The proposals have now been taken forward to the Mayor of London.

## **LAMDA, 155 TALGARTH ROAD, W14**

The London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA), sponsored by LBHF, have opened its new £28 million centre for drama training. This includes two new theatres, the Sainsbury Theatre and the Carne Studio Theatre. We are delighted that LAMDA are making strenuous efforts to involve the local community offering tickets regularly for performances.

## **12-14 WELLESLEY AVENUE**

This is a small local scheme on Nicholas Mee (Aston Martin and Lagonda) garage site. The scheme has caused much local controversy. We have written in support of the objections of the Hammersmith and Fulham Historic Buildings Group and the Brackenbury Residents' Association. They consider the application design to be unsuitable for the site and the street context. The application details are 2017/02065/FUL Garage Site at 12 Wellesley Avenue W6.

## **WOODEN SPOONS**

The Committee awarded Wooden Spoons in the 2017 Environment Awards to the new BT telephone kiosks with advertisements that have recently appeared on our streets and to the flats above Apple Estate Agents, King's Parade, Askew Road W12. The latter are crudely designed without any reference to the refined detailing of King's Parade.



## **SIX PINS AND A HALF DOZEN NEEDLES**

**The Assembly, London 77, Fulham Palace Road W6**



This surreal artwork, intended to resemble a page ripped from a book, has been installed on the site of the refurbished Assembly London, a campus of offices, retail units and restaurants situated near the Hammersmith end of Fulham Palace Road. The permanent artwork by Alex Chinnock was designed ‘to engage people in a fun and uplifting way’

## **HELICOPTER NOISE**

Various people have expressed concern that a noisy and disruptive northbound-southbound helicopter traffic route has started operating across Hammersmith. The Council is asking residents across the borough to help with the ground-breaking study it has commissioned to measure and map the noise created by helicopters using the London Heliport in Battersea.

The research study being conducted by South Bank University is the first of its kind in the country and will be used to find ways to reduce noise and improve the quality of life for those residents affected by helicopter flights. Noise recording devices are being offered to residents. Devices will record ‘noise energy’ and will not be listening to any private household conversations – they can identify helicopters by their unique sound profile. The equipment is apparently unobtrusive and simple to use.

To take part in the study and help fight helicopter noise in the borough please contact Martin Newton, secretary to the London Heliport Consultative Group, by email, or on 020 8871 6488

## **DIMES PLACE**

Plans for the redevelopment of Dimes Place were submitted by the developers, Thackeray Estates, to the council in June. These were met with unanimous disapproval by the local residents group (the Cambridge Grove, Leamore Street and Argyle Place Residents Association) whose members live around the boundary to the site. The Council has delayed responding to the application whilst further consultations take place.

## **BENHAM REEVES RESIDENTIAL**

The Hammersmith Society would like to thank Benham Reeves Residential from their continued support and sponsorship of the printing of this Newsletter.

## **HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM HISTORIC BUILDINGS GROUP**

The Hammersmith and Fulham Historic Buildings Group AGM will take place at the Dorsett Hotel, Shepherd's Bush Green on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November. Doors open at 6.30pm and the meeting starts at 7pm. The guest speaker will be Patrick Baty, an expert on paint and colours of the past four centuries. All are welcome to attend.

## **LBHF PARKS COMMISSION**

LBHF's Parks Commission has unanimously supported proposals to link the borough's parks to Fields in Trust, a charity committed to securing the protection of the UK's public open spaces. Such spaces are then protected 'in perpetuity' by legal covenants arranged with the landowners, meaning that they can never be sold off or built on, whilst management remains in local landowner's hands.

These plans drew plaudits from Park Friends, a London-wide network meeting at City Hall, with other boroughs urged to follow LBHF's lead. More details at [www.fieldsintrust.org](http://www.fieldsintrust.org)

## **THE HIVE**

The council have launched LBHF The Hive which is a crowd-funding site open to communities working to raise funds for local events, making improvements to their environment, or setting up new services. £100,000 has been allocated for small grants to add to money raised by local people and organisations.

## **HEATHROW EXPANSION**

Official consultation has now closed, but there is still much lobbying behind the scenes. Updates are available at [www.hacan.org.uk](http://www.hacan.org.uk) and HandF.NoThirdrunway.

## **VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE: FAST-TRACK PLANNING PROCEDURE**

In August London Mayor Sadiq Khan fleshed out his proposals for fast-track planning. He has asked councils to confront London's shortage of affordable housing by forcing developers to submit plans for scrutiny by City Hall experts.

'The finalised approach will allow developers of private land a fast-track route through the planning process without taking part in costly and protracted viability negotiations that have become the norm for London, if they meet a minimum of 35 per cent affordable housing without public funding.'

In my view, the clear danger in this race to meet affordable housing targets is that the environment will suffer. Developers are not going to cut their profit margins, and so will build denser and higher to recoup what they see as the added cost of affordable housing. It would also seem that for the proposals to work well London borough planning authorities, who are more in tune with local needs and concerns, will find their powers compromised.

*Richard Jackson*

## THE UNVEILING CEREMONY OF THE CAPABILITY BROWN STATUE



The statue, supported by the Hammersmith Society and by sculptor Laury Dizengremel is located at Distillery Wharf, Chancellors Road, W6. It was unveiled on the 24 May 2017 by the Mayor of Hammersmith Cllr. Michael Cartwright and the Chairman of the 2016 Capability Brown Festival, Gilly Drummond OBE, DL in front of a large crowd of local people and Brown supporters.

Following the unveiling, the statue was removed for a few weeks to have small modifications made to the base. The statue, the only full size bronze of Brown, is a permanent, national and public legacy to the great man and has already been taken to heart by the people of Hammersmith.

### **WILLIAM MORRIS STATUE**

Many of the objections to the Capability Brown statue were that William Morris was a more deserving candidate, but this missed the point that no one at the time was promoting or prepared to raise funding for such a statue.

There is now a move (not connected with the Hammersmith Society) to press ahead with a bronze statue to celebrate William Morris's association with the borough. The project is in early stages of development and the nature, size and location of the statue are yet to be agreed. Our comments to date have been that we think the statue should in some way convey his many achievements rather than be a traditional statue of 'a great man'.

**We would be interested to hear views from members on this proposal.**



## HAMMERSMITH SOCIETY COMMITTEE 2017-18

Following the Environment Awards at the AGM, the Committee for 2017-18 was elected:

Prof. Hans Haenlein RIBA (President), Tom Ryland RIBA (Chairman), Melanie Whitlock (Vice-Chairman), Richard Tollemache (Treasurer), Richard Farthing (Membership Secretary) Annabel Clark (Secretary), Angela Clarke MBE, Julian Hillman, Richard Jackson Annabelle May, Chris Tranchell, Richard Winterton RIBA, Derrick Wright.

## MEMBERSHIP

Many members will have received an email request this year to increase or renew subscriptions. If you have received such a request we would be grateful for a response with cheque, or preferably standing order. Subscriptions remain at £6 for individuals, £8 for a family or couple, and £15 for organisations. Please contact our Treasurer, Richard Tollemache, on email: [r.tollemache1@gmail.com](mailto:r.tollemache1@gmail.com) or download a membership form from [www.hammersmithsociety.wordpress.com/](http://www.hammersmithsociety.wordpress.com/).

The membership is the lifeblood of the Hammersmith Society. It is what gives it energy, validity and purpose. Our membership is steadily increasing, and with thirteen affiliated residents' associations we are able to reach thousands of members. The Society is in an increasingly good position to represent residents' interests.

We are Hammersmith's only borough-wide dedicated amenity society, and are keen to recruit new members. Do you know of a neighbour, friend or family member with an interest in the built environment, in architecture, and in the open spaces of our borough?

Please direct them to <https://hammersmithsociety.wordpress.com> for membership details or contact our Membership Secretary, Richard Farthing

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