

# **The Hammersmith Society**

## **Chairman's Report 2016 – 2017**

### **Welcome to this report on the last year's activities**

This is a briefer summary than in previous years. There are two reasons for this. The first is that I believe the majority of you receive my Monthly News Updates sent out by e-mail, and the second is that I am not sure how useful a long and detailed report is. I was also surprised re-reading last year's report to see how much of it was still relevant (You can read this on our website [www.hammersmithsociety.wordpress.com/](http://www.hammersmithsociety.wordpress.com/))

### **So - since our last AGM :**

There have been 8 committee meetings.

We have published 2 full Newsletters distributed as hard copies to all members.

I have sent out 12 monthly News Updates by e-mail. Unfortunately we are still short of e-mail addresses for about a quarter of our members and we would like to increase the number of members who receive these bulletins. If we don't have your e-mail address, you will not receive the electronic monthly updates! Therefore do please send it to me [tomryland@cparchitects.com](mailto:tomryland@cparchitects.com).

### **What have been our priorities?**

**Local Plans :** Both our Council and the OPDC (Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation) – of which about a third is within the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham – have been actively pursuing the development of their Local Plans. The Council's Plan is at a more advanced stage than that of OPDC and the 6 day long Examination in Public, at which the Society is represented, is in progress in Hammersmith Town Hall : It concludes on Thursday 22 June.

The consultations on these Plans are very onerous on groups such as ours and to have had two running in parallel has been extremely hard work. I would like to thank Melanie Whitlock, Angela Clarke and Rosemary Pettit in particular for their assistance. We hope that we have made a positive contribution of these plans, which will form the basis for local planning over next 10 – 15 years and more.

On OPDC, the Society continues to be much involved with consultations on both policy issues and quite controversial planning applications. When the new Mayor of London was elected last year, he set up a review of the overall plan. We contributed to this review in the form of personal letters to the Mayor and in face to face discussions with his special advisor. We re-iterated our principal concerns about densities and height, which were set out in detail in my report last year, and we questioned procedural aspects. We have had some success in agreement that there should be greater representation of Hammersmith and Fulham's interests on both the main Board and the Planning Committee.

We have attended further consultation exercises organized by both OPDC and some of the major developer/landowners including Car Giant. We have continued our involvement with the Grand Union Alliance, a collective representing a wide range of community organisations. We have also given our support to the Old Oak Neighbourhood Forum being proposed by Henry Peterson and others and Henry will be telling us more about this shortly

**Town Centre Working Party** : Many of you may have heard of this group which was set up by the Leader of the Council about a year ago to assist with the formation of detailed policies for Hammersmith Town Centre. This includes future heights, density, location of new office space, new homes and green space, and reducing the impact of traffic by remodeling the problematic gyratory. There are 4 members of your Committee on the panel of 25. There have been some 8 meetings with Council officers and the consultants Grimshaw who have been appointed to prepare a Masterplan. The work is still to be completed and the intention is that from the Masterplan, a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will be prepared and adopted as an adjunct to the Local Plan.

**Capability Brown Statue** : The completion and inauguration of this statue last month was a huge achievement, and almost entirely due to the energy and perseverance of our Committee member Richard Jackson with help from Rosemary Pettit. The Committee agreed to support the project, despite objections raised by some other local groups. Mr Brown is currently off site at the time of writing having suffered an initial wobble problem but we are assured he will be back soon and more securely fixed.

**William Morris statue** : Many of the objections to the Capability Brown statue were that William Morris was more deserving. 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 to press ahead with a similar life size William Morris statue and that this could be mounted in Furnivall Gardens. We would be interested to hear views from members on this proposal.

**Planning Applications** : These continue to dominate the work of the Society :

**OPDC** : As mentioned above there have been three particularly controversial applications for large, dense schemes to which we have objected. These are the 600 unit Genesis scheme involving towers of up to 26 storeys on the west of the site, the North Kensington Gate sites on Scrubs Lane involving tower of 22 storeys and the Mitre Yard scheme also involving a similar height tower on the opposite side of Scrubs Lane. The schemes are principally controversial because they flout OPDC's own Masterplan for medium density on these peripheral sites. With the exception of Mitre Yard, these schemes have been nodded through by the OPDC Planning Committee. We have been heartened that our Council – and Andy Slaughter as MP – have also objected to them and voted against approval.

**White City** : The intensification of development continues apace. Imperial College are currently completing development of their site to the north of the Westway, and are now consulting on masterplan proposals for the area to the south (the old Dairy Crest site) which they have acquired from Helical Bar.

We have been involved in consultation and comment on proposals for a new office complex south of the BBC's ex. Media Centre on Wood Lane and detailed aspects of ongoing applications for Westfield and St James. The new John Lewis store north of Westfield, now nearly complete, is disappointing with its lack of design flair. While the continued erosion of the public open space in White City relative to the original vision is also frustrating, we were pleased to be able to support Transport for London's proposal for opening up the railway arches between the Westfield and ex BBC sites.

In Hammersmith Town Centre the most controversial and time consuming application has been for Landmark House. The initial scheme in the autumn of last year involved a tower of 28 storeys. A consensus of our members and other local groups felt this was too high and would cause harm to the views of our precious riverside, and lead to a domino effect in the Town Centre. The developers Eastern and Oriental and their

architects Rogers Stirk Harbour agreed to produce a revised scheme with the high tower reduced to 22 storeys. This is still a live application and we have said that it should only be approved in the context of the Town Centre Masterplan.

**Other proposals or applications which we have considered or been involved in consultations over the last year include :**

Savoy Circus Student Housing at Savoy Circus on Westway  
Cambridge House (Alterations and additions).  
Walkabout – Apart housing and cinema – Adjacent to Dorsett Hotel.  
St Augustine’s Church and Friary Alterations and new build dormitory wing).  
Adelaide Works - Redevelopment/conversion.  
Aldbourne Road/Sedgeford Road (Infill housing).  
104 – 108 Fulham Palace Road (Redevelopment).  
10B Shepherd’s Bush Road (Redevelopment of carwash site).  
Quaker Meeting House (Revised proposals - Bradmore Park Road).  
Hoxton House hotel (Site of former Shepherd’s Bush post office).  
30 Ravenscourt Gardens – Redevelopment.  
1 Ravenscourt Park – Redevelopment/conversion.  
Hammersmith Police Station – Alterations and extension.  
33 Standish Road (Advertising hoarding).  
Dimes Place (Site of former Moss and Co timber).  
Margravine Cemetary – Gatehouse at North Lodge.  
12 – 14 Wellesley Avenue – Redevelopment.  
2 – 14 Shortlands - Redevelopment.  
75 – 77 Jeddo Road – Redevelopment.  
41 Iffley Road - Conversion of former chapel to offices.  
68 – 72 Hammersmith Road (Harrods HQ).  
Shepherd’s Bush Market (Application for temporary extension).  
Various proposals for ‘phone masts and pavement boxes.  
Hammersmith Broadway – TfL proposals for cycle lanes on the gyratory.  
Initial proposals by QPR to relocate their ground to the Linford Christie Stadium site.

The Public Inquiry Appeal for the Triangle site was set to take place over three days in March but was postponed at the last moment due to personal circumstances of the Inspector : We have yet to be advised of new dates.

We have continued to express our concerns about the expansion of advertising hoardings, sometimes sponsored by the Council to raise revenue. We have already noted our concerns about the pavement mounted advertising by BT masquerading as public service ‘phone boxes. At the same time, we applaud the successes achieved by the Council’s Enforcement Team headed by Carolyn Goddard in getting unwanted hoardings removed, as well as successful prosecution of non-approved building works.

**Other activities in which the Society has been involved over the year :**

**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.

**Heathrow** – The Society made a submission to the Government’s Public Enquiry.

**Shepherd’s Bush Traffic Scheme** – This is a scheme prepared by Henning Stummel, a local architect, which involves the removal of traffic from the north side of the Green.

This is an interesting proposal in early days of its development. We wish Henning good luck with this project.

**Cecil French Collection and the Archives** – Melanie Whitlock and Annabelle May are involved with ongoing discussions as to the future of these.

**Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday – Commemorative Tree** – The Society sponsored the purchase of the tree, which was planted by the Council in Wormholt Park.

**Riverside Studios** – We were pleased to be able to arrange site visits for our members prior to the commencement of the fit out. We look forward to the completion next year.

**Parks** – We continue to monitor the situation in our parks with continuing concerns regarding over intense use, particularly by schools and the availability of funding for maintenance. We support the work of the various Friends groups. Annabelle May is a member of the Parks Commission recently set up by the Council.

**Fulham Palace** – The Society continues to be represented on the Community Forum and the Advisory Panel. The Palace has now secured Heritage Lottery funding for the next tranche of improvements within the Palace and external landscaping.

**Other Groups** – The Society continues its support for the London Forum, Open Spaces Society, the h&NoThirdRunway group and HACAN.

We are grateful to our 15 or so affiliated groups and societies which range in size from the Hammersmith and Fulham Historic Buildings to relatively small resident associations. We also maintain regular links with the Fulham Society and the Putney Society. We believe it is most important and valuable to maintain dialogues and exchange information with all of these groups.

I would now like to thank you – our members - for your continued support and interest. I or members of the Committee would be happy to try and answer questions you might raise on any of the topics covered above.

My thanks too to my committee for all their help and support in a year for me that has not been the easiest or most straightforward. I would like to thank Melanie Whitlock specifically as Vice Chairman. Also Richard Jackson for editing the Newsletters, Richard Tollemache for handling the accounts, Annabel Clarke for stepping in as Secretary and Richard Winterton for his input on planning matters.

We are sorry that Rosemary Pettit is stepping down from the Committee. We thank her for all her energy and activity and wise counsel on the Committee, particularly as Chairman and Membership Secretary. We wish her all the best in her role as Mayoress.

We have welcomed Richard Farthing as a new co-opted Committee member during the year, and likewise welcome the recent offer by Chris Tranchell to join the Committee – but we are open to other offers of help. There is still time to put yourself forward for election.

Finally I want to thank the Dorsett Hotel for hosting our meeting for a second year running at no charge and for their generous support.

**Tom Ryland**  
**Chairman, The Hammersmith Society**

**June 2017**