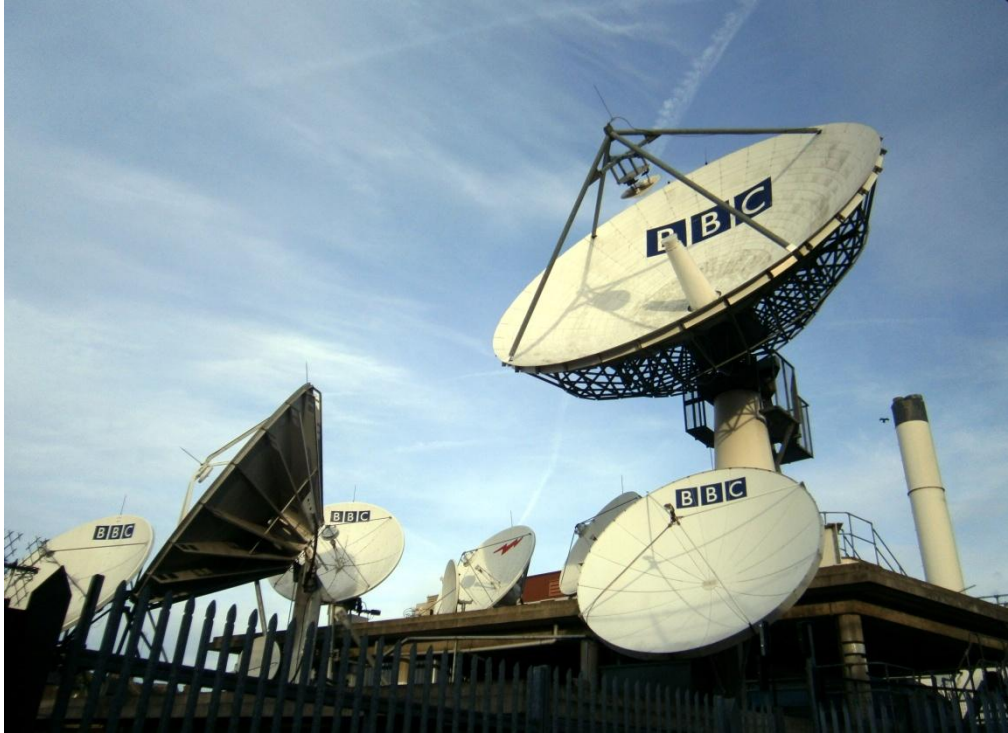




## The Hammersmith Society

### Newsletter April 2013



*Photo from the "50 Special Places" project: BBC satellite dishes, White City by Marion Rivenell*

#### **AN INVITATION: 2013 AGM, THURSDAY 6 JUNE**

**M**embers, friends and residents are invited to our 51<sup>st</sup> AGM which will be held on Thursday 6 June at the Grove Neighbourhood Centre, 7 Bradmore Park Road, W6 0DT at 7.30pm. Doors open at 7.00pm and there will be light refreshments. Members are warmly invited to attend and to bring friends and neighbours. The AGM is an opportunity to discuss latest developments in our urban environment, and to hear what project has won the Hammersmith Society Environment Award for this year – and the wooden spoon nominations.

Nominations for the Committee should be received by Annabelle May, Hon Secretary, 35 Ashchurch Grove, W12 9BU, by 29 May. *(Please note this is the only written notification you will receive of the AGM, but email reminders will be sent out to members whose email addresses we have.)*

## **ENVIRONMENT AWARD**

Every year we ask members and people who live or work in Hammersmith to nominate a new building or urban design scheme for our Environment Award, which is intended to increase awareness of the best of new design and architecture in the borough, and create pressure to improve the indifferent and mediocre. Details for nominations are on the enclosed sheet and on our website, so please let us know your favourite urban project of the last year, or your nomination for the now celebrated Wooden Spoon.

## **BBC TV CENTRE AND WOOD LANE DEVELOPMENTS**

Our front cover picture from the Society's "50 Special Places" photo project marks the last network TV news broadcast from the BBC's historic Television Centre, on 18 March this year.

Last year Television Centre was sold to Stanhope plc who are converting it into a primarily residential development. The 1950s main circular building and Studio 1 which are Grade II listed will be preserved, and some 1000 dwellings are projected for the site, in the existing buildings and in a new tower of broadly similar height to the existing BBC carpark which will be demolished. The plan is to allow east-west pedestrian access through the site (unlike at present) which will improve life for residents in roads on the west of the site. After development is complete, some programme-making will return to the iconic Studios 1, 2 and 3 and the BBC's commercial arm, BBC Worldwide, will occupy office space on site, so the BBC connection will be maintained.

## **WOOD LANE DEVELOPMENTS**

The BBC proposal should be seen in the context of the 1,522 housing units already given planning permission on the phase 2 Westfield site and the 1,350 units given permission last month on the old Dairy Crest site off Wood Lane (now known as Brickfields W12 – see its website [www.brickfieldsw12.com](http://www.brickfieldsw12.com)), as well as Imperial's new campus by the Westway. The one remaining undeveloped site along Wood Lane is immediately north of Westfield 2 and belongs to Marks & Spencer, part of which is scheduled for a park.

There is no doubt that these brownfield sites are appropriate for redevelopment, but the degree of control and overall infrastructure planning which is necessary for such a large area is all but absent. The GLA/ H&F Council's White City Opportunity Area Planning Framework remains in draft, and has been overtaken by these developments. A much-trumpeted park the size of Brook Green is scheduled to run along the north of the Hammersmith & City viaduct. It would be the only good-sized piece of green open space in the area appropriate for vigorous exercise for children and ball games, and the only encounter point for the island communities of Wood Lane - yet it seems very likely this park will be at risk from the development pressures of the area. Without protection from a finalised Opportunity Area Framework, developers are likely to find there are more persuasive arguments for turning land into residential units than into green open space. The Hammersmith Society has made the case to the chief planners at the GLA and Hammersmith & Fulham for the need to safeguard this project, but so far we have had no response.

## TOWN HALL REDEVELOPMENT

The next design stage of the new Town Hall site proposals was recently unveiled, and can be seen on the developers' website, [www.kingstreetregeneration.co.uk](http://www.kingstreetregeneration.co.uk) (go to Downloads / Stage 2 exhibition panels). In line with the Council's commitment last year, the scheme is limited to the height of the existing Town Hall extension, there is no bridge over the A4 and the Pocklington Trust homes are not touched. The new architects are the well-known, locally based practice Lifschutz Davidson Sandilands. Their latest version retains and re-clads the existing Town Hall Extension, (while removing its bulky rear bay, platforms and external stairs) which enables views through to the original Town Hall from the sides and through the central glazed atrium.



*Proposed view from King Street through the glazed atrium towards the entrance to the Town Hall*

Front steps based on the original design for the Town Hall would be rebuilt enabling access to the first floor of the old Town Hall, with an open space between the two buildings. (The original steps were demolished when the Town Hall Extension was built, 1971-75). Cromwell Mansions, an Edwardian gem facing Dalling Road to the west of the Town Hall, would be retained and refurbished.

The current cinema offer – this is still a work in progress at the time of going to press - does not keep the 1930s cinema building but proposes a cinema complex in the Town Hall Extension, of some 240 seats divided among 3 screens, and the website says: “Following early consultation with residents, King Street developments have committed to the retention of a cinema on the site.”

The scheme would consist of 200 flats and some 40,000 sq ft of office space for the Council. Both the number of dwellings and the office space are considerably reduced from the original proposals.

More of the Listed Grade II 1930s Town Hall would be visible from King Street than at present, by way of angled views on either side of the remodelled Town Hall Extension (which would become flats) and through the ground level/first floor glazed atrium. On either side of the atrium there would

be cafes or restaurants.. The exterior of the Town Hall Extension would be finished in glass, while the mansion flats on Nigel Playfair Avenue and the offices on the old cinema site would be brick to acknowledge Riverside Gardens and the Town Hall.

£1million is promised to the King Street Regeneration Fund, specifically for improving King Street frontages beyond the site itself, and £4million for works to the original Town Hall – clarification is needed on what these works would consist of.

There is much to welcome in these new proposals but much detail is still to be worked up. The Society would want to explore how watertight the promise of a new cinema complex would be in reality; and it would be desirable if the original Town Hall could enhance the new development – it already makes a civic offering but could this fine building not be adapted to greater social, cultural and educational uses as well?

### **SHEPHERD’S BUSH COMMON**

**T**he promised facelift of Shepherd’s Bush Common is taking far longer than anticipated. The work was made possible by funding arising out of the Westfield Shopping Centre development, but when work finally began last year the remains of an unexploded WW2 bomb had to be removed and the area decontaminated; works then coincided with one of the wettest summers on record, and sections of the Green remain waterlogged after this year’s miserable March. The Council informs us that once the ground dries out it will be decompacted, aerated and returfed. The metal “Goaloid” structures are temporary, but are being allowed to remain for 3 months once the works on the Green are complete, as they have been placed on what is effectively a construction site which was not the original intention.

Unfortunately the eastern apex of the Green, over the Ginglyk Club, is not included in the refurbishment and its scruffy state will continue for the time being. Significant structural works are required on the premises, and the Council is negotiating with the Club on this.

Planting of new plane trees means that a double avenue of planes will grow up either side of the Green, and the new bonded resin paths are a great improvement, although the quantity of hard standing is excessive. Once the works are fully complete we should be able to appreciate a fine and uncluttered green space once more.

### **KINGS MALL CAR PARK GLENTHORNE ROAD**

**T**his scheme from developers St George emerged last summer with briefings, workshops, three exhibitions and a planning forum – there was at least no lack of liaison between the developers, Council and amenity societies. The scheme received planning permission last month. There will be few regrets at the loss of the brutalist Glenthorne Road multi-storey car park.

The scheme involves 418 dwellings of which 30% will be “affordable” (although no “affordable” for rent, only for purchase), with 7 storey blocks facing Glenthorne Road. There will be 11 and 14 storey blocks behind, and a 17 storey tower on the corner of Glenthorne and Beadon Roads which will certainly have an impact on the skyline from Overstone Rd and the north. Perhaps the most successful section of the development is the low-rise housing turning the corner into Leamore Street on the west.



In general the flats are small, offering little family accommodation, raising the possibility of yet more buy-to-let investment. A small supermarket or other retailer is proposed for the ground level on Beadon Road. There will be 700 car parking spaces mostly underground, with the new exit for the carpark emerging in Glenthorne Road. Mature trees along Glenthorne Road will be felled, but new trees planted to replace them.

*Developer's image of Glenthorne Road elevation*



This is a big beast of a development, and many of its defects arise from over-density. The Society therefore objected to the proposal. However we were able to influence the design to some extent, supporting the Council's refusal of an even taller tower, contributing variety to the Glenthorne Road frontage, vertical articulation and house doors to Leamore Street, and landscaping, tree and garden ideas to the street. Unfortunately, despite many pleas, we were unable to prevent removal of the 10-metre landscaped corner at Glenthorne and Beadon Roads which contributes so much to the streetscape and the mitigation of weather and pollution.

### **ARCHIVES AND LOCAL HISTORY CENTRE**

**T**he Council has undertaken to continue the present once-a-week opening of the Archives and Local History centre through this new financial year: Mondays 10.00am- 4.00 pm, booking information on the Council's website, [www.lbhf.gov.uk](http://www.lbhf.gov.uk). More information is due soon on the future plans for housing the collection. The lease on the Lilla Huset premises where it is currently housed expires in 2016. Meanwhile, Hammersmith Library in Shepherd's Bush Road is scheduled for refurbishment next year and will close for a substantial part of 2014.

### **271-281 KING STREET**

**A**t the time of going to press the plans from Linden Homes for this prominent site opposite Ravenscourt Park suggest a staggered front elevation with heights ranging from 3-7 storeys, designed by architects Lifschutz Davidson Sandilands. The pleasant London House building

on the site would be demolished.

The proposal is for 66 residential units from studios to 3-bedroom flats. The Society is concerned that too much is being crammed onto the site, in height and density. Immediately to the south and round the corner in Beavor Lane the Palco site is due to be developed to offer 8 4-storey houses and a small commercial premises. The design for the 271 site – especially its Beavor Lane elevation – has Gothic echoes, the Palco proposal is classical. Both sites should have a complementary treatment so the design and massing of each scheme takes account of the other.



*Proposal for 271-281 King Street seen from Ravenscourt Park: Premier Inn tower to left*

## **CONSERVATION AREA PROFILES**

**W**e are pleased that Barbara Woda, the Council’s head of Urban Design and Conservation until her retirement two years ago, has been appointed to complete the production of Conservation Area Profiles. Eleven Conservation Areas are still without these important documents, which include a short history of the area, a description of its character and appearance, and include design guidelines. Barbara started with the Grand Union Canal CA and has almost completed its Profile; she is now beginning work for the Bradmore Conservation Area.

The Character Profiles are subject to consultation with interested groups and then formally adopted by the Council as supporting documents to the Council’s Planning Guidance. Helpfully, the profiles are taken into account when making planning decisions and advising applicants for development.

## **OTHER NEWS**

We deplore the **painting of original period brickwork**, especially on locally-listed buildings of merit, such as Seven Stars public house on Goldhawk Road. The Council cannot take enforcement action unless a building is statutory listed, but such actions diminish our streetscape and local character... **Shepherd’s Bush Market** and its immediate surroundings are subject to a Compulsory Purchase Order by the Council to enable a controversial redevelopment to go ahead, which will demolish this pleasant, characterful and inexpensive local market and its surroundings, replacing it with (eventually) a redeveloped market with 7 storeys of flats above. We are of the view that while a thriving market is an essential component for the economic and social welfare of Shepherd’s Bush, it is unnecessary for Goldhawk Road shopkeepers to be brought into the development or for their business to be disturbed... Groundwork and the Council are using the GLA’s **Pocket Parks** scheme to make improvements in Cathnor Park, and Thames Water’s pilot sustainable water use scheme will

extend from Melina Road into Cathnor Park itself and include landscaping.. More information from Cathnor Park Area Action Group/ [annabelclarke@gmail.com](mailto:annabelclarke@gmail.com).... **The Ram Brewery site in Wandsworth** has an application for a 36-storey tower, which would be clearly visible down the river from Hammersmith.... **282-292 Goldhawk Road**, scheduled for a widely-disliked scheme in 2008/9, has a new, less dense proposal offering 22 houses and 3 flats, which would retain many of the trees on the site... **Nomis Studios in Sinclair Road** also has a revised proposal for a 54-dwelling development, meeting some but not all of the earlier concerns about density and noise from the car lift and balconies... On the **Masonic Nursing Home/ Ashlar Court** site in Ravenscourt Gardens (currently being turned into apartments) a small modern house is being squeezed onto the site with fenestration which does not coexist happily with the Listed Grade II 1930s' main building.

#### AND ALSO....

**Membership Secretary:** The Hammersmith Society represents some 1000 households in Hammersmith through our individual members and members of our affiliated societies. We would love a membership secretary to keep lists and contact details in good order and, with the support of the committee, encourage more residents to join Hammersmith's only dedicated amenity society. To find out more, or to help with the work of the Society more generally, please email Chairman Rosemary Pettit at [rosemary@rosemarypettit.plus.com](mailto:rosemary@rosemarypettit.plus.com), tel 0208 846 9707. **Website manager:** We welcome Upper Mall resident, Una Hodgkins, who has volunteered to manage the website: [www.hammersmithsociety.org.uk](http://www.hammersmithsociety.org.uk), and thank Melanie Whitlock for her sterling work in setting it up and nurturing it in its early years.

**New members:** a recommendation from an existing member is the best way to bring in new members. If you know a neighbour, relative or friend in Hammersmith who takes a lively interest in the area why not introduce them to the Hammersmith Society

**Subscriptions** are £6 for individuals (£5 concession), £8 for a family or couple, and £15 for organisations. Contact the Treasurer, Julian Hillman, at 19 Flanchford Road, W12 9ND, email [hillman19@btinternet.com](mailto:hillman19@btinternet.com) or download a membership form from the website.

#### HAMMERSMITH SOCIETY COMMITTEE 2012-13

Professor Hans Haenlein MBE (President)	Annabel Clarke
Rosemary Pettit (Chair)	William Cooper
Tom Ryland (Vice-Chair)	Angela Dixon
Annabelle May (Secretary)	Richard Jackson
Julian Hillman (Treasurer)	Carlo Nero
Chris Allen	Melanie Whitlock
Angela Clarke	Richard Winterton

**Contact the Society** by emailing or writing to the Secretary, Annabelle May, 35 Ashchurch Grove London W12 9BU [secretary@hammersmithsociety.org.uk](mailto:secretary@hammersmithsociety.org.uk)



*Photomontage of projected A4 tunnel – replacing the Hammersmith Flyover - from the east*

## **TUNNELLING THE A4**

**W**ould you like to see the A4 through Hammersmith disappear into a tunnel? If so, read on - and come to a **presentation/exhibition at the Town Hall at 6.30pm on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> April in the Mayor's Foyer.**

A group of nine local architects' practices, led by our Vice-Chairman, Tom Ryland, is seeking to achieve this with the help of the Halcrow Group, one of the world's top transportation design consultants with specialist tunnelling expertise - and which is, of course, based in Hammersmith.

The group presented initial ideas and precedents from around the world at the London Festival of Architecture event held in Lyric Square last June. This followed on from an earlier proposal by the group four years ago to bury the A4 between Hogarth Roundabout and the Hammersmith Flyover and reconnect Hammersmith to the river. But when the Flyover closed at the end of 2011 for major repairs, it was clearly time to look at the wider picture. These repairs are still not finished and, even when they are, the Flyover will have a limited lifespan.

Hammersmith and Fulham Council agree and, like the group, now believes that the tunnel should run from Hogarth Roundabout to Earls Court. However, Transport for London (TfL) are responsible for the road as a major trunk road and for funding such a project. They are in the process of carrying out a major review of roads in London and have earmarked the A4 for a special study.

The tunnel would be a major long-term infrastructure project. The first step would be a feasibility study by TFL using specialist and local knowledge. The aim of the April exhibition/presentation is to argue the case. The architects' group are setting up a separate company to work with Halcrow on feasibility.

It is worth recalling that the construction of the A4 cutting through the heart of Hammersmith in the 1950s was one of the main reasons why the Hammersmith Society was founded. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to reverse this town-planning disaster.

Your support is needed - you are warmly invited to attend the event and to bring friends and neighbours. Further details will be available nearer the time and will be emailed to members.