

On Kew

AGM

Our AGM was held in October in the distinctive surroundings of the Musical Museum, Brentford. Sited near the river, this unique building (picture below) houses a wide variety of musical instruments that provided talking points for our members as they arrived for the meeting.

Our Chairman, Michael Glazebrook, led us through the Agenda and Juliet Thompson, Treasurer presented the accounts. If you were unable to attend the meeting and wish to receive a copy of the Annual Report and Accounts, please either visit our website www.kewsociety.org or write to us at 25 Chelwood Gardens, Kew, TW9 4JG.

The committee are seeing some changes this year with the appointment of Mary Done as Hon. Secretary and the departure of Ben Knight, Ulrika Bulle and Barney Smith. Barney has completed the maximum six-year term under our constitution as Vice Chairman and both Ben and Ulrika have moved away from the area. Our thanks go to Barney, Ulrika and Ben for their much-appreciated contribution to the running of the Society. A number of individuals have expressed interest in joining the Committee and discussions are proceeding with them with a view to co-option at present.

After the AGM, members and their guests enjoyed a buffet Supper and were then treated to a marvellous medley of musical numbers by Richard Hills on the cinema organ in the main hall. Saved from a closing local cinema, this organ has been meticulously restored and Richard was able to display its range to excellent effect. Richard's performance covered a range of musical styles – an impressive end to a very enjoyable evening.

As a final note, Mary has now produced the draft Minutes of the meeting and they can be found on our website or a hard copy obtained by writing to 25 Chelwood Gardens, Kew TW9 4JG.



National Planning Policy Framework

Since the publication of our Autumn newsletter in which we alerted our members to the Government's draft National Planning Policy Framework, we have now submitted our written comments to the Department of Communities & Local Government.

We made the following points:

- Sustainable development the definition of this phrase as used in the draft was felt to be woefully inadequate and require tightening to ensure clarity.
- The presumption in favour of development we have serious concerns on this and requested that it should be made subject to the policies in the Local Plan, thereby allowing a local authority to prepare an effective and workable plan for its area, while taking account of national and local needs for new housing etc.
- Local plans we asked that Local authorities should be given more, not fewer powers to protect their locality by, for example, designating certain areas for new development, giving priority to brownfield sites and limiting the number and scale of developments in areas of historic interest or natural beauty.
- Neighbourhood Plans we indicated our dissatisfaction with the suggestion arising from the draft that the only neighbourhood plans that will have any influence are those that want the neighbourhood to be developed. We would also wish plans that place restrictions on development to be supported.
- Design we objected to the idea that 'planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes'
- Historic Environment we suggested that there should be clear guidance on the need for conservation areas and a presumption against development in conservation areas unless the development preserves and enhances the character of the area.

We will certainly keep you abreast of any changes on this issue.

Richmond Council open spaces policy update

We have had discussions with other local groups on two policy documents issued recently by Richmond Council for consultation relating to Parks & Open Spaces in the Borough – a 'Strategic Principles' document and a new 'Events Policy'. By the time you read this newsletter, we will have made our submissions, along with the Richmond Society, Friends of Richmond Green and Westerly Ware Association.

Our concerns include aspects of the planned procedure for allowing events to be held on open areas and a new policy which proposes increasing the range and number of events so as to 'maximise financial gain for the Council'. We believe the primary purpose of areas such as Kew Green and Richmond Green is to provide an open space for the enjoyment of local residents and visitors, that local residents and community groups should have a say in the use of their open spaces and that the number of commercial events should be strictly limited, especially in residential areas. The policies are available on the Council website for those who are interested and wish to comment. The Events Policy is at:

http://www.richmond.gov.uk/richmond_events_policy_version_21.10_11pdf

The Richmond Society Awards 2011

As you may know, the Richmond Society holds an annual Awards ceremony. This is as one of their aims is "to encourage good development through recognising buildings and other schemes which make a positive contribution to the Richmond Town and Hill areas."

We do not operate a similar scheme in Kew, as there isn't the volume of developments to justify an annual appraisal. Having seen the excellent renovation of the Marianne North Gallery located in Kew Gardens, we made a decision to approach the Richmond Society and ask if they would be prepared to make an exception and venture into 'our patch' and consider the Gallery for an Award. The Richmond Society kindly offered for our members to attend and we sent out a notice by email. Regrettably the time available did not allow us to post this notice out, if you would wish to advise us of your e-mail address to ensure that you receive such notices in future, please e-mail webmaster@kewsociety.org

Several members of our Committee as well as a number of our members attended the ceremony at St. John the Divine church in late October and were pleased to be present when the Gallery renovation won the coveted brass plaque as best development of the year. Representatives from the Royal Botanic Gardens, from the Architects, Donald Insall Associates and from the contractors were there to collect. The formal proceedings were followed by wine and cheese in the Church hall.

Greener upon Thames

The Greener campaign has been busy recently and is currently focussing its efforts on the London 2012 Games. There have been several meetings with the organisers over the last months and while the response has been encouraging, the Games organisers have not yet committed to ridding the Games of plastic bags. In order to keep the pressure up, Greener's co-Patron, Roz Savage, visited City Hall in November. Roz is an Ocean Rower and has just completed her third ocean crossing to become the only female to have rowed solo across the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans. At City Hall, Roz delivered an early Christmas present for London Mayor Boris Johnson, a sample of plastic 'soup' from the middle of the North Atlantic. If you would like to support this campaign, then please sign the petition for a plastic bag free Olympics at www.greeneruponthames.org

Thank you

...to those members who kindly included a donation with the renewal of their membership recently.

We do appreciate these contributions that then assist with the work of the Society.

Events

With the nights drawing in and the temperature dropping, we're looking forward to running our stall at the annual Kew Sparkle event that'll be held in the village on Friday, 2nd December. Although we were sad to lose Ulrika Bulle from our Committee at our AGM, she has kindly agreed to produce a further series of thought-provoking pictures of Kew for our Photocompetition. Do stop by and take up the challenge!

Our traditional Festive activities will continue with our annual Twelfth Night drinks. Will we all have to brave the snow to attend this year? Who knows at this stage but a warm welcome will undoubtedly be waiting whatever the weather. Full details of this event are available separately.

In February, we'll be holding one of our ever-popular Bridge Drives. This enjoyable evening is open to players of all levels and includes a light Supper. Full details of this event are also available separately.

Events are planned for further into 2012 and information about them will be following in the New Year.

Contact us

We always welcome comment from our members and the local community. We are still gathering your views on the Kew Village Market.

Your Committee

Chairman	Michael Glazebrook	chair@kewsociety.org
Hon. Secretary	Mary Done	
Hon Treasurer	Juliet Thompson	treasurer@kewsociety.org
Planning	Giles Dixon	planning@kewsociety.org
Environment	Simon Owens	environment@kewsociety.org
Membership	Sue May	membership@kewsociety.org
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Events	Sally Sutton	secretary@kewsociety.org
Additional member	Rob Sheldon	
Patrons	David Blomfield MBE Sir Donald Insall CBE Baroness Tonge of Kew	

JOIN NOW by visiting our website

You can write to us at:

The Kew Society, 25 Chelwood Gardens, Kew, TW9 4JG