



## The Kew Society Newsletter • Autumn 2017

### *Welcome...*

to all our readers as Autumn creeps up on us, plenty of news below. As more of our news updates are sent out electronically, our newsletters will include articles of more general interest to those of us who live in and care about Kew. We look forward to hearing your feedback – and suggestions for future articles. We also hope that more of you will agree to receive your newsletter electronically

The AGM falls on Wednesday 25th October this year – make sure it is in your diary. It's your chance to let us know what you think of your society and to meet other members, Patrons and Trustees – and hear more about the role The Kew Society plays.

### **The new Kew Society...**

On 1 August 2017, The Kew Society stopped operating as an Unincorporated Association and started operating as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. However, with the exception of a significant increase in legal and financial protection for trustees, nothing much has changed. The objectives and powers of The Kew Society are very similar to what they were before and the trustees remain accountable to members. Visible changes should be restricted to the change in our registered number with the Charity Commission.

We are a new entity and the old entity will remain dormant until formally closed. The next AGM in

October will be an AGM for both societies where we will present an overview of our activities over the last 12 months.

Our new constitution is available on our website. Much of the increased wording merely provides more detail on how we operated in the past. The additional capabilities include proxy voting at meetings and for the trustees to be able to participate in their meetings electronically.

Welcome to the new Kew Society.

### **Heathrow**

We continue our work with the Richmond Heathrow Campaign (RHC) which has published its responses to five recent Government consultations (see <http://www.richmondheathrowcampaign.org>). They cover the draft Airports National Policy Statement (NPS), the Economic Regulation of Heathrow, two responses on airspace modernisation – the design principles and the process for changing flight paths with implications for safe aircraft separation and

acceptable noise reduction - and the draft UK air quality plan. The Government has also announced the night-flight regime for the next five years, which remains unchanged in spite of all the representations to reduce noise impact. On 7th September a further consultation was announced on the draft NPS to take account of the revised evidence base for the policy decision – revised aviation demand forecasts and the Government's final air quality plan.

# Kew Gardens Station Planting Unveiled



The newly planted flowerbeds at Kew Gardens station were unveiled on 25th July during a ceremony attended by Zac Goldsmith, MP for Richmond Park; the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Benedict Dias, and representatives from London Transport, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and Energy Garden.

The planting project, initiated by the Kew Society, has transformed four areas on the platforms at Kew Gardens station, which were previously overgrown with grass and weeds. It's taken two years to complete and is a unique collaboration between the Kew Society, Transport for London, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Energy Garden and Richmond Council.

The idea for the makeover came from Kew Society Chair, Caroline Brock. Her aim was to transform the neglected areas into a haven of colour, a worthy gateway to the World Heritage Site, Kew Gardens.

The design for the flowerbeds was drawn up by Suzie Jewell, from Kew Gardens. The aim is to provide colour and interest to the platforms all year round. Kew Society volunteers worked alongside horticultural experts from Energy Garden to plant more than 1,500 plants and shrubs. The planting was completed at the end of 2016 and, since February this year, new plants have been coming into bloom.

We are grateful for the efforts of our volunteers who are working with station staff to maintain the beds, keeping them watered and free from weeds throughout the year. Our thanks also go to Bloomfield Cars for letting us use their water.

We have entered the station planting project and nearby areas being looked after by our members for Richmond Council's Best Village in Bloom award. The award ceremony is taking place at the end of September so keep an eye on our website and Facebook page for the result.

## Planning and Environment Update

### North Road Surgery

Funding of the additional rental costs and some of the capital costs of the move of the North Road surgery to Emerald Gardens has finally been agreed. The Surgery will be liaising with the developers to agree timescales, terms of the lease and other contractual arrangements. Richmond Clinical Commissioning Group will continue to provide support where appropriate to ensure a smooth move, expected to be in October 2018.

The Blueland Group, which has worked with the Surgery on this project, is looking at options for the use of the remaining space, allocated for community use. Space for "social prescribing" is being considered along the lines of the Bromley-by-Bow Centre model - see <http://www.bbbc.org.uk/services-for-you>

# Planning

Despite a possible pause for breath in the current property market, developers' ambitions for sites in Kew and just across the river in Brentford remain undiminished. Sandycombe Road locations have been the subject of a number of applications on which The Kew Society has made representations/objections. In one significant case, 1-9 Sandycombe Road, we spoke at a Planning Appeal against aspects of the proposal in support of the Council's refusal but the Inspector granted permission. North of the river, we continue to be frustrated by Hounslow's lack of a co-ordinated, planned approach to development which effectively allows developers to propose overdevelopment of individual sites without an overall context, infrastructure and transport provision.

We have objected to the proposal to develop three tower blocks of 550 flats above a bus depot on Capital

Interchange Way; to the redevelopment of the Watermans Arts Centre overlooking the river with multi-storey flats impacting Kew Gardens and we are awaiting the formal proposals for the residential redevelopment – as “Hudson Square” – of B & Q at Chiswick roundabout and the “Citroen” site on Capital Interchange Way. A fresh planning application is being made for a slightly smaller, Brentford football/rugby stadium with fewer community benefits but with “enabling” residential tower blocks unchanged in volume or visual impact on Kew.

In a rare case, the “Chiswick Curve” – we expect to be supporting Hounslow's planners' decision to refuse permission for this 32 storey twin tower residential development at Chiswick roundabout which has now been appealed by the developer. A full programme for the planning team.

## Events

Below is a snapshot of recent events. We aim to organise something for everyone and ideas for events are always welcomed - thank you for those received via the Summer Party!

June 2017 - The HRP team at Kew Palace gave us an intriguing out-of-hours tour of Kew Palace and The Royal Kitchens, including an update on the restoration of the Great Pagoda. We finished the evening with a glass of wine and nibbles in the Royal Kitchen. Did anyone else there feel, in the evening shadows, the ghostly presence of servants busy in the Kitchen and the clatter of horses' hooves on the Palace drive as George III and family returned home to dine?

Back to reality in June! The Kew and Richmond Societies jointly organised a General Election Hustings at Duke Street Church. This proved to be a lively and informative debate.

July 2017 – we hosted a social evening for 60 Members at the Priory Park Tennis Club. Despite the grim weather, it was an excellent opportunity to meet new and existing members. What struck home is that the community spirit is alive and kicking – both for Members who have lived in Kew for ages, and for newcomers.



its history, work and future plans. We marvelled at the clear views we had of buildings in the City, and - of course - the otters stole the show!

August 2017 - 40 Members were up with the lark to enjoy an early morning guided tour of the London Wetland Centre, and to learn about



Our stand at the Kew Horticultural Show on Bank Holiday August weekend was a pleasure to run - it was dry, our “winner every time” card game organised by Jane Hogan was a hit with children and, interestingly, appreciated as much by adults!

Coming up on Monday 1st November - the last talk for 2017 is entitled “Dirty Linen” - an insight into the Royal Laundry in Kew Foot Road, Richmond, designed by Prince Albert. The Laundry managed all washing from the royal households once the railways came to Richmond in 1846. Adding to a swirling mix of information will be anecdotes from our speaker, Lucinda Ganderton.

We hope to see you at these events where you will have the chance to meet other members and residents of Kew. Please keep checking the Events page on the website for more information.

# The History of Kew Pond



*We thought our readers would be interested to learn more about some of our local amenities. Mike Adams spoke to Diana Dunrossil, who leads the team of volunteers who look after Kew Pond, to learn a little of its rich history.*

Kew Pond is thought to date back to before the Norman Conquest. 10th century documents mention a “fishery at Kaio juxta Braynford” being granted in 996 by the Saxon King Ethelred to the diocese of Winchester. By the 18th century, it had become a village pond which was used for watering livestock and cleaning carriage and wagon wheels. In 1824, the creek linking the pond to the River Thames was partly filled in to give access to the King’s School.

As this cut the pond off from its natural inflow, it could only be filled once a month when the tide on the River Thames was exceptionally high. This resulted in low lying water levels and insanitary conditions during the summer months. In 1887, it was proposed that the pond should be filled in as it was considered a health hazard, but local residents appealed. In the early 1900s, a concrete ramp was built and the walls were concreted over. In 1965, a network of drains was constructed to allow street drainage from the surrounding area to flow out to the river and river water to flow into the pond through a heavy iron flap which can only be accessed from the river bank at low tide.

Richmond Council experienced difficulties in keeping the pond filled and by the mid-1950s, it was being used as a car park, a playground and a rubbish tip. By 1978, there was a serious threat that it would be filled in and turned into a car park. The Kew Society,

together with local residents, therefore put forward plans to restore it.

In 1981, it was decided that as the process of filling the pond depended on the height of the tide on the River Thames, the only solution was to allow volunteers to take this over on a regular basis. For more than thirty years, volunteers operated on an informal basis. In 2010, Richmond Council decided that a more formal arrangement should be negotiated with the volunteers and the Friends of Kew Pond was formed. There is now a regular group, led by Diana Dunrossil, who fill the pond

monthly. Kew Pond provides habitat for a variety of water fowl and invertebrates and is enjoyed by many visitors and residents.

More detail about the pond can be found on our website.

## *And finally....*

Hope to see you at the AGM on 25th October. And keep an eye on our website for updates on events.

### Contact us

#### Your Committee

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**JOIN NOW by visiting our website:**  
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