



## The Kew Society Newsletter • Autumn 2019

### Welcome...

to all our members especially those who have recently joined. We have had a busy start to the Autumn in the Kew Society – many activities on the gardening front, several tours of Kew Palace and many hours spent studying and responding to consultations that affect us all in Kew as well as our well-attended AGM.

### Gardening Update

Our volunteers continue to expand their activities whilst maintaining the existing planting in Kew Village and on Kew Green. We have new plants under the European Nettle Tree on Kew Plaza: a Heuchera Black Pearl, an Actaea simplex Pink Spire, an Achillea millefolium Tutti Frutti, an Aстранtia Star of Treasure, a Geranium “Dreamland”, a Veronica longifolia First Lady and a Scabious. This tree has small green flowers and dark purple fruit, loved by birds.

We are also working with the Royal Botanic Gardens and St Anne’s church on a plan to rejuvenate the churchyard with



*Our volunteers take a break from planting in Kew Plaza*

6,500 bulbs as well as low maintenance flowers and shrubs. The churchyard is in a prominent position on Kew Green as one enters Kew from the Bridge and it is hoped that a blaze of colour here from the replanting will enhance yet further the beauty of our area for visitors and residents alike. Richmond Council’s Parks Department are supporting our Civic Pride Fund application to implement the scheme. We will be calling for volunteers to help with the big planting days. If you are interested in this, or in regular gardening with us, please contact [secretary@kewsociety.org](mailto:secretary@kewsociety.org)

## **Richmond Park & North Kingston Parliamentary Constituency GENERAL ELECTION HUSTINGS**

**Thursday 28 November 2019**

**7:30 pm to 9:00 pm**

**Duke Street Church**

**Duke Street, Richmond TW9 1DH**

**Doors open 7:00 pm**

**Questions for the candidates  
should be submitted no later than**

**Thursday 21 November  
to the organisers**

**The Richmond Society  
22 Grosvenor Road, Richmond TW10 6PB  
[secretary@richmondsociety.org.uk](mailto:secretary@richmondsociety.org.uk)**

**or  
The Kew Society  
68 Mortlake Road, Kew TW9 4AS  
[secretary@kewsociety.org](mailto:secretary@kewsociety.org)**





# Planning

A feature of the Kew Society's summer was our public meeting on planning held in July at St Luke's in the Avenue. This was well attended with over 100 in the audience, members and non-members alike. The aim was to provide a general picture of the planning process and then to focus on major developments north of the river and around Kew so that residents could have a more informed view of what is planned and what is already being built that would affect our area. Prior to the talks, the audience were invited to enjoy a glass of wine whilst inspecting displays about the major developments in the Kew area in general which our Events team had set up around the hall and to discuss these with sub-committee members. The audience were shocked to see visual representations of these developments.

Peter Eversden, MBE, Chair of the London Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies opened the programme with a passionate and expert view of the planning process and its dangers, particularly the relaxation of rights to carry out works and change uses of property without planning permission.

John Ricketts then took us on a 'walk' from St Luke's over Kew Bridge to inspect the huge developments taking shape over the river now and in the pipeline. He focused on the Chiswick Curve and the planning appeal in August 2018 at which the Kew Society took a leading role. The decision of the Secretary of State to dismiss the developer's appeal against refusal of the scheme by Hounslow Council had just been announced (currently being challenged by the developer in the High Court). Alice Shackleton briefly outlined what the planning sub-committee does and then focused on the massive Homebase development. That scheme, having been rejected by Richmond Council, has now been called in by the Mayor of London for determination. This emphasised the role of the Mayor in local planning issues which Peter Eversden had highlighted.

Seeing visual representations in relation to the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew (RBGK), the river and Kew was an experience that really brought home their potential impact on Kew.

We continue to monitor planning applications and decisions in the borough. These include:

- the Four Regions restaurant at 102-104 Kew Road which applied for permission to change two flats above into 7 smaller flats. Despite opposition from neighbours and our Society, permission was ultimately given after an initial refusal.
- Tesco Express in Station Parade, Kew which applied for permission for advertisements, including Tesco blue surrounds for the ATM; the Society objected and recently the application has been withdrawn (partly because permission was not required for most of the ads which were internal, and Tesco accepted that the colour and material of the ATM surround was inappropriate).
- 12 Kew Green (previously Linnea) : application for a new shop front which, initially, was in keeping with the other shopfronts but was then revised to a design we considered to be inappropriate – we have objected to this and await the result.
- Kew Grill, 10 Kew Green: an application to change the use to residential with alterations and extensions to create 5 new dwellings. As of 14 October this has been validated and neighbour notification has begun; we urge you to check this application, ref: 19/1853 if you have not been notified.
- 68 Kew Road: the façade of this house within a terrace in the Kew Foot Road Conservation Area was completely changed with rendering, an inappropriate dark colour, and features such as window sills, "threading" bricks removed. Enforcement action has resulted in a planning application for some remediation works and we are supporting the Council.

# Events

The Kew Society events offer opportunities to meet and greet neighbours, friends and residents and learn more about the River Thames and local area. Events since the summer have included:

Our August Summer Party which was great fun, including excellent catering from The Pomegranate Kitchen, lively conversation and a friendly, but challenging, quiz.

September tours of Kew Palace were again very successful. Stories from the past brought the Palace and its occupants to life. The evenings ended with a glass of wine to toast our hosts and ghosts in the adjoining Royal Kitchens.

The talk on Virginia Woolf scheduled for September was sadly cancelled due to the speaker being unwell. However, as he has now recovered, we will be rescheduling this talk during 2020.

Coming up to the end of 2019 – dates on our website:

- A talk by Tracy Borman on Elizabeth I
- The newly instated Annual Kew Gardens Community Meeting, co-organised with RBGK and chaired by the Kew Society
- Tours of the King's Observatory in the Old Deer Park
- A River Thames walk/talk during the annual "draw-off of the river" by Jason Debney, Co-ordinator, Thames Landscape Strategy.

2020 tours and talks are in the final planning stages – full details will shortly be publicised. Please do come along and support our events.

# Pensford Field



*New Year Wassail event at Pensford Field*

Hidden behind an imposing set of steel gates, between 17 and 19 Pensford Avenue, apparently leading only to a set of tennis courts lies perhaps one of Kew's better-kept secrets. The Pensford Field Environmental Trust is a small charitable organisation dedicated to the care of an area of land in the very heart of residential Kew which contains woodland, dead wood (loggeries), a pond, meadow, a wild-life corridor and beehives. As such, it is a haven for wild flowers, birds and insects, and is also a site of importance for nature conservation and is a designated area of tranquility.

It also inspires art, children's play and education; and regularly hosts 'garden parties' at which all the family is welcome and where one will find music, delicious food and, quite often, the opportunity to buy locally-produced food



*The pond at Pensford Field*

such as Kew Village Honey and a variety of jams, all made from produce found on the site. More recently, the local Boy Scouts conducted a bat survey, identifying three different types – the Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle and Lesser Noctule – each identified by recording their "squeak" on a special recorder.

The next famous New Year Wassail (see picture) is on Sunday 5th January 2020. And for more details of that and other events, see <http://www.pensfordfield.co.uk/>. For an entry code to get in, you will need to email [info@pensfordfield.co.uk](mailto:info@pensfordfield.co.uk). You can also become a Friend of the Field which will give you priority for their events including an afternoon tea party each September.

Paul Bethel

## Contact us Your Committee

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Patrons:

Sir Donald Insall CBE  
Sir David Durie KCMG  
Nick Baird CMG, CVO  
Gudrun Edwards

**JOIN NOW by visiting our website:  
[www.kewsociety.org](http://www.kewsociety.org)**

Charity number: 1173016

**You can write to us at:**

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