



The Kew Society Newsletter • Winter 2019/20

Welcome....

to our first newsletter of 2020, we hope you all had a fabulous Christmas and wish all our readers a very happy new year, and we trust that you were able to see the Christmas tree on Kew Plaza to which we contributed – it certainly added to the festive atmosphere all around the village. We also hope that this decade will be kind to everyone in Kew.

As we seem to be blessed with quite a few cemeteries in and around Kew, some with fascinating histories, we sent John Moses (Kew Society member and local historian) to have a look at one of them and the noteworthy people buried there. His article (on Page 8) makes interesting reading.

GP surgery opens in Levett Square

We are delighted that the former North Road GP practice, now part of the Richmond Medical Group, has moved into its new premises in Levett Square. The surgery has 11 consulting and treatment rooms, all with state-of-the-art facilities and furnishings, and is at least double the size of the former surgery, thanks to the successful bid in 2017 to the Richmond Council's Village Planning Fund. The practice now has two sites, the other being at the Sheen Lane Health Centre, and 13 GPs, serving a total of 17,000 patients. In the long term, there are plans to offer social prescribing which will facilitate a more holistic approach to people's health and wellbeing and provide clear links to local community groups.



The new entrance

A decision on the outcome of the consultation into the extension of the opening hours of the surgery – from 5.00pm to 8.00pm Monday to Friday and to 5.00pm on Saturdays – is awaited. Many residents of Levett Square have objected: however, the extended opening hours has been strongly supported by the Kew Society: we contended that it would make much better use of the modern facilities that the surgery has to offer and also improve the convenience and accessibility for the patients that it serves.



The reception area



A treatment room

PLANNING

The last few weeks have been relatively quiet as we are waiting on major development inquiries to be scheduled. Here are some of the more important local matters decided or still under assessment.

87 Kew Green (MK Complete Joinery Ltd) (beside ASK restaurant)

The new occupants have transformed the disused gentlemen's conveniences into a joiner's shop. Unfortunately, they added rooftop advertisements – all very inappropriate in a Conservation Area and on a listed Bridge. Applications for planning and listed building consent for an illuminated sign have now been refused.

Kew Grill, 10 Kew Green

An application to change the use of the main part of the building (excluding the shop fronting Kew Green) to residential and create flats over most of the site has been refused. A welcome result!

Homebase, Manor Road

The application was called in by the Mayor of London, who will now act as planning authority.

After discussions with the Mayor's office, the developer has revised the scheme so there will be 433 flats (up from 385), a new building over the bus layover, and taller heights allowed (10 storeys) on some of the buildings, whilst those immediately fronting Manor Road are reduced by one storey at the front. There will now be 14 disabled parking spaces.

Detailed objections to the revised application have been submitted, although all indications are that the Mayor will approve the application. The date of the public hearing is awaited.

North of the river

An application has been submitted for a major redevelopment of the B&Q site on Chiswick Roundabout (to which we are objecting). On the adjacent Chiswick Curve site, we await the outcome of the developer's appeal to overturn the Secretary of State's rejection of the scheme.

The public inquiry on the Citroën site will start at 10.00 am on 14th January 2020 at the Brentford Free Church, and that for the Watermans site on 28th April (both of which have been called in by the Secretary of State).



The Homebase site as it is now



.... and how it might look in the future.

ENVIRONMENT

Old Deer Park developments

The Kew Society is a founder member of the Old Deer Park Group, which was formed in 2011 to work with the Council and other leaseholders of the Crown Estate to conserve and enhance the Old Deer Park. The group is a joint initiative that brings together The Richmond Society, The Kew Society, the Friends of Richmond Green, the Friends of Old Deer Park, and the St Margaret's Estate Residents Association.

The group celebrated a modest success over the summer following the conclusion of the Council's work to upgrade and 'soften' the entrance to the Old Deer Park car park to the south of the A316, including the installation of wooden barriers and heritage gravel and the renovation of some damaged brick pillars. The Council is now interested in upgrading the largely overlooked route that runs between the railway viaduct and the A316 for nearly half a kilometre and connects the car park with the river.

Anyone familiar with this rather attractive route through a conservation area, or who may have tried to enter the Old Deer Park from the entrance opposite Asgill House on Old Palace Lane, will know that the low-lying area near the river is flooded regularly.

For a few days after the standing water has subsided, walkers are faced with back-tracking or taking their chances through slippery ankle-deep mud.

For the route to be passable in 80% of flood conditions, the Council is planning to install a 'boardwalk' of about 40m through the wettest part of the area under the A316 road bridge. At the same time, the path that weaves around the eastern water tower will be surfaced in water-resistant resin bound gravel, with the longer path that connects the river and Old Deer Park car park to be surfaced in unbound gravel. The group is supportive of the Council's proposals, which seem to strike a good balance between preserving the special character of the area and enabling better accessibility.

The work is expected to start in the spring, and the Council is keen to hear from volunteers who could help with cutting back vegetation and similar tasks. If you would like more information about this please email: environment@kewsoc.org.



Photographs of the Boardwalk Route

Rejuvenation of St Anne's Churchyard



Volunteers Mike Adams

We are delighted that Richmond Council has approved our application for a Civic Pride award of up to £5,000 for a new planting scheme at St Anne's churchyard.

The scheme idea is the result of a collaboration between us, the Royal Botanic Gardens and St Anne's church. Suzie Jewell at the Royal Botanic Gardens, who also did the design for us at Kew Gardens station and has just completed the new Children's Garden within the Botanic Gardens, drew up the planting design for us pro bono.

We will continue to work with St. Anne's church, Richmond Council and their contractors – Continental Landscapes – to implement the scheme over the coming year.



and Caroline Brock

Volunteers from the Society's gardening team and the church, working with Continental Landscapes, made a start in December using funds from the Kew Society, by planting bulbs ready for the Spring.

You can read more about it here: [https:// www.kewsociety.org/news/st-annes-churchyard-rejuvenation/](https://www.kewsociety.org/news/st-annes-churchyard-rejuvenation/)

Turner's House – Trustee Vacancy

The board of Turner's House Trust is hoping to recruit new trustees to join the current eight-person board. In particular, they would like new trustees with fundraising and/or marketing expertise. If any Kew Society member is interested, more information can be found on the Turner's House website at <https://turnershouse.org/get-involved/> under Job Vacancies. The post is unpaid. Anyone interested is welcome to contact Giles Dixon, Turner's House Trustee, for further discussion, at giles@gilesdixon.com



Heathrow Expansion

The Kew Society (TKS) and the Richmond Heathrow Campaign (RHC) have submitted responses to the consultation by the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (RBGK) on its World Heritage Management Plan. We have highlighted the environmental impact of Heathrow expansion and the threat it poses to the RBGK's Outstanding Universal Value as a World Heritage Site. Noise and air pollution already adversely affect staff and visitors to the gardens, and as the number of flights increase this will only get worse. Air pollution also poses a significant threat to plants and wildlife in the gardens, and climate change will impact the eco-system at Kew. We have urged the RBGK to work with us in opposing Heathrow expansion. Heathrow's timetable for a third runway is facing a delay after the publication by the Civil Aviation Authority of a consultation document on early expansion costs. The aviation regulator wants to limit the amount that Heathrow can spend on construction before it receives planning approval in order to prevent the costs being passed on to passengers if the project is cancelled. The move could

The Nation's Favourite Gardens

Many of you voted for the Kew Green Gardens in the competition to find the Nation's Favourite Gardens. We were delighted that the Kew Green Gardens were named as winner for the South East Region! For those of you who have never taken the opportunity to visit, make a note in your diary now to visit Nos. 65-73 Kew Green on 24th and 31st May 2020 as part of the National Garden Scheme Open Days.



Some of the award-winning gardens on Kew Green

delay the scheduled opening of the third runway by up to three years. Climate change could pose a further threat to Heathrow expansion. The Government is due to publish shortly its deferred Aviation Strategy and its approach to a warning issued by the Climate Change Committee last year that the demand for flights must be curbed if the UK is to meet its target for net zero emissions by 2050. The RHC will be making the case that Heathrow's growth and its international-to-international passengers (who never leave the airport) should be restricted, rather than limiting growth at UK regional airports. Kings College London has just published research detecting ultrafine particles (UFPs) transported by wind from airports into neighbouring cities (e.g. from Heathrow to Marylebone Road, London). RHC has often highlighted the danger to human health of UFPs from Heathrow's operations. This research is likely to add to the air quality obstacles faced by Heathrow. A Judicial Review decision by the High Court on the Government's support for Heathrow's third runway – sought by Richmond Council and others – is expected in January. Meanwhile, the RHC will be engaging with Heathrow over the next six months on conditions the planning inspectorate will be considering for dealing with aircraft noise and its impact.

EVENTS

The Kew Society events offer opportunities to meet and greet neighbours, friends and residents and learn more about the area.

Up to the end of 2019 Members enjoyed:

- A fascinating talk by Tracy Borman, Curator, Historic Royal Palaces – ‘The Private Life of Elizabeth I’.
- The joint annual Community RBG Kew / Kew Society open evening.
- King’s Observatory tours in the Old Deer Park.
- The annual ‘Draw-off of the Thames’ foreshore walk led by Jason Debney, Co-ordinator, Thames Landscape Strategy. Wellies were a must and our hardy group learnt so much about the river and its mysteries.



Kew Society members at the annual “Draw-Off”

Jason Debney explains the mysteries of the Thames



Kew Palace Kitchens Today (but not what the King ate !!)

- Following the Kew Society AGM, we were delighted by a talk given by Susanne Groom – Author and former Curator, Historic Royal Palaces – on food served to George III whilst at Kew - ‘A dainty dish to set before a King at Kew’.
- Finally, The Kew Society linked up with The Richmond Society to host a lively, well-attended and very successful Hustings prior to the December General Election.

2020 events will include talks on:

- 'Windsor Castle – A Thousand Years of History';
- 'The Industrialisation of Kew and North Richmond in the First World War';
- 'The Lost Francavillas of Kew' – the story of 13 exquisite Italian statues ordered by Frederick, Prince of Wales;
- 'The History of London Heathrow';
- 'Virginia Woolf in Richmond and Kew';
- and finally, a jaw-dropping talk featuring the historical contribution plants have made to dentistry!

2020 events will also include:

- Visits to Turner's House for a guided tour and view of his rarely seen five oil sketches of the Thames from Isleworth to Windsor;
- A Thames towpath clearance organised with the Thames Landscape Strategy;
- A visit to the Royal Paddock, Hampton Court;
- A stand at the Kew Summer Fayre in June and at the Kew Market in August;
- Guided tours of the WWT London Wetland Centre, Gunnersbury House & Park, and Syon House and Gardens;
- A guided tour of Wren churches in London; and
- A Waterloo to Windsor summer morning steam train journey.

The Kew Society Events team looks forward to meeting you during 2020 and to hearing your feedback and ideas for future adventures.

Kew Village Market wins top prize

We are delighted to tell you that Kew Village Market – run as it is entirely by volunteers – won the People's Choice Award as the public's favourite business in Richmond, against stiff competition. It was amongst the five shortlisted nominees from a very large number of entries, and winning the People's Choice Award caused much jubilation.

The judges paid particular tribute to the quality and variety of stalls. Anne Newton – Richmond Chamber of Commerce CEO & Chair of the Richmond Business Awards – added 'huge congratulations from all of us at the Chamber of Commerce: a well-deserved win'.

David Linnette – Chair of Kew Village Market Committee – added 'this award means more to us than any other because we've won it through the votes and support of all our customers – Kew residents and visitors alike, our wonderful stallholders, local musicians and stalwart band of volunteers. This trophy belongs to us all !!'



Local History – Old Mortlake Burial Ground

The old Mortlake Burial Ground near Barnes Hospital was established in 1854 and is one of the oldest cemeteries run by the Borough. There are a number of well-known people buried here. I propose to look at just six, namely Sir Edwin Chadwick, Sir Arthur Bliss, two members of Charles Dickens' entourage – Charles Dickens (junior) and Georgina Hogarth – as well as two senior naval officers, Rear Admiral Lord William Fitzroy and Admiral Sir Erasmus Ommanney. There are also a number of servicemen from both World Wars buried here in well-kept graves.

Sir Edwin Chadwick (1800-1890) was then the most influential civil servant involved in public health and was the driving force in creating the Public Health Act 1848, the first piece of legislation set up to oversee the health of the whole nation. After several cholera outbreaks, he also sought to improve the system of sewers in London.

Sir Arthur Bliss (1891-1975) became Master of the Queen's Music in 1953. However, his musical career was put on hold by the First World War, when he served as an officer in the Royal Fusiliers and was wounded twice. Initially after the war, he was influenced by the avant-garde music of Stravinsky and his contemporaries, but soon returned to a more traditional style, including composing two fine choral works and the music for the ballet *Checkmate*.

Charles Dickens (junior) (1837-1896) – the author's son – tried various careers, but does not seem to have succeeded in any of them. When he died, he left his widow penniless, but she was given a Civil List pension of £100 a year. Georgina Hogarth (1827-1915) was the sister of Dickens' wife Catherine, and was living in Charles Dickens' household as his housekeeper when Dickens very publicly separated from his wife in 1857. However, Georgina stayed on as his housekeeper until Dickens' death in 1870, and he left her a substantial legacy. In later life, she became a close friend of Nelly Ternan – Charles Dickens' mistress – who was immortalised in Claire Tomlin's biography *The Invisible Woman*.

Rear Admiral Lord William Fitzroy (1782-1857) saw extensive action in the Napoleonic Wars. After getting his own command, he was court-martialled and dismissed from the service for selling off the ship's stores and for being an overly harsh disciplinarian. However, the Prince Regent intervened and restored him to his previous rank, and he was subsequently promoted to Rear Admiral – but the Navy never gave him another command.

Admiral Sir Erasmus Ommanney (1814-1902) saw action only at the battle of Navarino in 1827 and when he commanded a squadron blockading Archangel during the Crimean War. However, he was involved in a number of expeditions, including one seeking to find out what happened to Sir John Franklin's expedition. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society for scientific work on these expeditions. Ommanney Bay – off Prince of Wales Island in Northern Canada – is named after him.

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The grave of Sir Arthur Bliss



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