

The Kew Society Newsletter • Spring 2018

Welcome...

Spring has finally arrived, Storm Emma remains a distant memory and it is wonderful to see the beautiful Spring blossom and flowers, including those planted by the Kew Society opposite Victoria Gate. With the reopening of both the Pagoda and

the Temperate House in the next month at the Royal Botanical Gardens, there is much to look forward to in and around Kew – including, as you will see below, the many interesting events organised by our Events team.

Station Gardening

It's good to see that the station gardens easily batted away the 'Beast from the East' with a lovely display of hellebores, and with hardly time to catch our collective breath we now have a magnificent display of cherry blossom accompanied by euphorbia, whose unleashed energy is a sight to behold. While our cherished plants have been making up for lost time, unfortunately so it seems have a lot of others. So Gardening Volunteers, it's time to scrape the rust off your hoes, do a few gardening yoga stretches and come on down to the station: the weeds are waiting for you!



Photos courtesy of Alison Arnold

Heathrow

The Richmond Heathrow Campaign (RHC) responded to two Heathrow Airport Ltd consultations, one on the expansion of Heathrow and the other on principles for the redesign of airspace, with or without a third runway. The responses are on our website.

Parliament's Transport Select Committee, which used some of the RHC evidence, particularly on financing and costs, has now published its report. Though it agrees a third runway at Heathrow is the best option, their report contains a number of recommendations

on the conditions to be met by Heathrow and Government if the planning application is to be successful.

Next steps are for the Department for Transport to publish its revised National Policy Statement taking on board the comments from the Select Committee ahead of a parliamentary debate in June/July, before the Summer parliamentary recess. If approved by Parliament, it can go forward for planning consent as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project.

Interview with Caroline Brock and Dr Roger Mason



Caroline Brock will be standing down after four years as Kew Society Chair this autumn. When starting her tenure Caroline had clear ideas about the direction she wanted The Kew Society to take.

“Not long after becoming Chair, the London Forum asked me to write an article on The Kew Society. It made me think about my aims as Chair. I said that as an organisation working through influence, not power, I wanted The Kew Society to build constructive relations with those who do exercise power, to be seen as an organisation that is professional and considered, to create a positive perception of what we stand for – objecting to things only with good reason, constructively and in the interests of the community; a positive voice engaged in public policy, a fun organisation with events which help people know Kew better, and an organisation that instigates environmental improvements.”

What has been achieved during the past four years?

“We now have a growing membership, a new website and social media presence, a new Constitution and

focus on governance. If I were to name my proudest achievement, it would be the replanting of the beds at Kew Gardens station. And my greatest sadness, the death of our wonderful Patron, David Blomfield. We have a strong Committee and 3 new Patrons and I am confident that our new Chair will provide the leadership needed to go from strength to strength.”

Roger Mason will be Caroline’s successor. A Kew resident since 1973, Roger is a founder member and former Chair of the Kew Residents Association. He has already been involved with projects for The Kew Society.

“I am very interested in the traffic problems in Kew, the resulting poor air quality, and the effects on our health. My first job for The Kew Society was assessing the potential effects of the proposed Brentford Community Stadium development on air quality on our side of the river.”

What will be the aims of The Kew Society in the future?

“Caroline Brock has been an outstanding Chair and has set a very high standard.

The population of Kew has expanded enormously over the past twenty years with the building of the Riverside estates. We need to do more to bring the old and the new Kew together. I would like to recruit many more members from the Riverside estates and the recent Emerald Gardens development. I intend to build on the good relations we have with two world-class institutions in Kew, the Royal Botanic Gardens and the National Archives, identifying matters of concern and supporting one another where possible.

We will continue to monitor planning applications for new developments with the aim of getting the best results for our beautiful area of West London.”

There Be Dragons



Following the highly successful and well-attended talk (see opposite) about the Restoration of the Great Pagoda to be opened on 25th May, the committee decided to make a financial contribution to the restoration by paying for one of the flight of 80 stunning dragons which were one of the original features. Our dragon will be on the 5th to 7th level so be sure to go and see it. It reopens to the public on 25th May.

Planning and Environment Update

The Planning team continues to have a busy time with major developments both within our borough and across the river. Very recently, the formal applications for the redevelopment of the Mortlake brewery have been made public and include proposed changes to the Chalkers Corner intersection. We will be reviewing this application for its impacts on Kew, focusing on the traffic, pollution and infrastructure aspects.

Within Hounslow, we were disappointed that their planning committee has approved the redevelopment of the Watermans site with a block of flats with adverse visual impacts on Kew Gardens, Kew Palace and associated heritage assets. Although the scheme proposes the relocation of the cinema/arts centre to Brentford town centre, the viability of its long-term funding lacks evidence. The Royal Botanic Gardens have written to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to review the planning application.

On the other hand, we were pleased when Hounslow turned down a proposal to develop 550 flats as “enabling

development” to fund a bus garage beneath on Capital Interchange Way. Elsewhere on Capital Interchange Way – the former Citroen works – Hounslow also rejected a scheme of 5 residential tower blocks of up to 18 storeys to contain over 400 flats. In a subsequent development, the Mayor of London has now “called in” this application with a view to increasing the proportion of “affordable” housing although he claims he will weigh the concerns about the impact on heritage sites.

Preparations continue for our contribution to the Public Inquiry in Hounslow over the proposed Chiswick Curve (a 32 storey part office and part residential tower on a tiny site at Chiswick roundabout). The Inquiry arises from the developer’s appeal against Hounslow’s refusal of consent and the Planning Inspector’s report will be passed to the Secretary of State for his final decision.

At a strategic level, we have made representations on emerging policy documents and are currently preparing a contribution on the latest National Planning Policy Framework.

Events

The Kew Society Events team wants to thank everyone supporting our events - these help to inform about the Kew area, meet neighbours or new residents and help everyone be aware of the need to preserve the beauty of Kew:

- **Dirty Linen** – the story of Richmond’s Royal Laundry designed by Prince Albert when the railways came to Richmond in 1846. Speaker Lucinda Ganderton.
- **The Greenings of Brentford End : Royal Gardeners** – a fascinating joint talk offered with the Richmond Local History Society about the management of agricultural land on both sides of the Thames. Speaker Val Bott.
- **Restoration of the Great Pagoda at Kew** – an update talk (with a Dragon!) about the immensely detailed work that has been put into this restoration overseen by Historic Royal Palaces. As the scaffolding is being removed and the Pagoda unwrapped, the dazzling finial and top dragons are now on view. Speakers Lee Prosser & Polly Putnam.
- **Richmond Divided. The Great Chertsey Road – A History of the Old Deer Park and the A316** – a fascinating insight into the history behind this busy road and why it never actually reached Chertsey.... Speaker Paul Velluet.
- **Richmond Park – A National Nature Reserve** - a charming, short film by the Friends of Richmond Park which was selected as one of the top five films in

line for a Charity Film Award. Narrated by Sir David Attenborough, it gave an insight into the complex natural world of Richmond Park, London’s largest Site of Special Scientific Interest and a European Special Area of Conservation.

Events coming up include:

Friday 11th May – Early Evening Guided Tour of Kew Palace, its newest exhibition plus the Royal Kitchens.

- Kew Palace is the smallest of all the royal palaces in the U.K. and the oldest building in Kew Gardens.
- Our guided tour will end in the Royal Kitchen where we will raise a toast to the royals who lived in Kew’s charming Palace.

Sunday 10th June – 10 a.m. – House and Garden Tour of Chiswick House

- Royal connections recur when we visit our neighbours for a splendid tour of Chiswick House.

Saturday 21st July – Kew Society Party Time.

- The Kew Society summer evening get-together is again at Priory Tennis Club.

Have you ever wondered what your local Police Community Support Officer does?

We interviewed PC Lorraine Childs to find out.



(from left to right) PC Lorraine Childs, PC Wharmsby, PC Dyson.

How long have you been the PCSO for Kew Safer Neighbourhood Team?

I have been a Police Community Support Officer since 2008, starting my career on Hampton North Ward and transferring to Kew in 2012 (previously full-time and now part-time).

I work alongside two Police Constables assigned to Kew and one Sergeant who is currently responsible for three teams (North Richmond and South Richmond).

What does your role involve?

My role is very varied and one day is never the same as the next which keeps me on my toes!

A non-exhaustive description of my responsibilities includes patrolling, gathering intelligence, engaging with the Kew community, conducting victim of crime visits, visiting vulnerable residents, school talks, attending community events e.g. fetes, assisting colleagues on various takings/operations/arrests, providing security surveys, working in partnership with other agencies e.g. housing associations and local authorities, various administration tasks, training, organising events, public meetings.

What are the key issues that you encounter in your work?

A key issue that I encounter in my role is generally not enough time during my shift especially when something “unexpected” crops up, but we always expect the unexpected!

What more could we all do to help to enhance the safety of our community?

Regarding how we can all assist for the safety of our community, I would encourage residents/public to take advantage of police-led initiatives that educate and inform e.g. on home security, scams.

Joining or setting up a Neighbourhood Watch, as well as receiving information about the area and crime figures, can help break down barriers and encourage neighbourly relations.

Attend our public meetings, they are your opportunity to hear what has been going on in and around Kew as well as voice any concerns/issues and help prioritise what you would like the team to focus on.

Trust your instincts, if something doesn't look or feel right, if you see someone going round the back of a house, if you see someone looking into a vehicle, call the police.

And finally....

Kew Community Trust

Our thanks go to Kew Community Trust who have kindly agreed that we can hold our monthly committee meetings at the Kew Community Centre in The Avenue.

Contact us

Your Committee

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JOIN NOW by visiting our website: www.kewsociety.org

Charity number: 1173016

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