



KNIGHTSBRIDGE ASSOCIATION

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2022

CHAIRMAN'S REVIEW

The Royal Parks



Dear Member

YESTERDAY

It is hard not to consider what residents' associations could do for their members if ever faced with circumstances like those unfolding in cities across Ukraine. Conscious that it was not that long ago that we faced an existential onslaught ourselves, I turned to Jerry White's recent book *The Battle of London 1939-45*, a social history of local civil defence in London over six tempestuous years, to seek guidance.

The area around Knightsbridge played its part in adapting to those circumstances. Following the Blitz of 1941, 'an immense dump of old bricks, wood and scrap iron' was brought to a site in Hyde Park and piled high. It was 'a cemetery of iron bedsteads, burned-out motor cars, lorries, baths, gas cookers, electric stoves, geysers, water tanks' according to Jerry White's account. In Kensington Gardens, an immense pile of pink brick rubble rose 'high against the trees like a palace of

oriental coral, undulating its beauty over several acres'. Garden railings were melted down for armaments in a programme that lasted from the summer of 1941 into the Spring of 1942. Slit trenches were dug in St James's Park to shelter anyone caught in the open during a bombing raid and allotments for growing vegetables appeared in terraces by the Albert Memorial.

I could not find references to "Residents' Associations" or "Amenity Societies" in *The Battle for London*, almost certainly because they did not exist or were too embryonic to be involved with civil defence, the brunt of which was handled by Local Authorities with central Government support. For example, The Kensington Society was founded in 1953. The KA followed in 1961 - a fact we tried to celebrate three times over the past two years! Apart from the Chelsea Society, founded in 1927, many societies were established in response to the post-World War II building boom that started in the 1950s and rolled on into the 1960s.

The Knightsbridge Association's founding fathers were Leonard Bonham, Robin Gillett and David Croom-Johnson and the aim of the Association was to "preserve and enhance the character and amenities of Knightsbridge for the benefit of its Residents and those who work here". Their initiative was a response to plans by a well-known department store to establish a large auction house on the corner of Cheval Place and Montpelier Walk. The scheme went to public enquiry and was turned down. Other redevelopments followed – Bowater House, Caltex House, Silver City House, Mercury House – whose footprints remain to this day even if the original buildings have been redeveloped.

TODAY

The challenges facing residents' associations today are obviously very different and are now as much about controlling human behaviour as they are about architectural integrity. This trend has accelerated even during my relatively recent involvement with the Association, having been stimulated further by the arrival of Use Class E planning provisions that allow cafés and restaurants to step into former retail space. Licensing and Planning applications at 70 Brompton Road and 13-17 Montpelier Street show how changing behavioural patterns impact residential amenity and this is the issue that preoccupies the Association at the present time.

Late-night dining at both the above locations would attract large numbers of people from outside Knightsbridge and inflict a devastating impact on residents, if either of these had been approved. However, I am pleased to report that after a concerted campaign by residents supported by the KA, the licensing application at 70 Brompton Road was turned down by Westminster Council in December 2021 while the 13-17 Montpelier Street case awaits the outcome of an Appeal due to be heard by the Planning Inspectorate later this year. The latter case also involved proposed amendments to five Listed Building consents, and we would like to record our appreciation for the support received from Westminster councillors in calling in these Applications for scrutiny at a Planning Committee hearing rather than having them determined under delegated powers. Thanks also go to residents for their continuing and vital support for these long running planning cases.

The Knightsbridge Association is delighted to be a member of the Knightsbridge Partnership representing residents' interests on the Partnership board. The Partnership, originally styled the Brompton Road Business Improvement District,

came into being on 1 October 2021 with a £6m budget and a five-year programme of improvement for the Brompton Road district. We offer our congratulations to Steve Medway, the Partnership's first CEO who takes up his post at the end of April. We look forward to working with him, the Partnership Board, and the executive team in the months ahead.

TOMORROW.



PRESS ASSOCIATION / Danny Lawson

The restoration of the monarchy took place 362 years ago in 1660. Her Majesty the Queen's seventy-year reign accounts for a remarkable twenty percent of that great span of history. King Charles II's return was marked by a river pageant witnessed by diarists Samuel Pepys and John Evelyn and memorialised

in Canaletto's 18th century painting 'The Thames on Lord Mayor's Day'. This year's Jubilee events are many and varied and spread across the year, including a Bank holiday on 3 June. The Knightsbridge Association celebrates the joyous occasion of Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and wishes to record its thanks for her long and devoted service.

Melville Haggard
Chairman

KATHY GRADE

Lady Grade – Kathy – who died on 1st January, was vice president of the Knightsbridge Association from 2013 when she took over from Lord Marshall (Colin). She and her



husband, Lew, were keen supporters of the Association from early days when they were living in the penthouse of Cheval House, Montpelier Walk. A constant helpmeet to her husband throughout their marriage, Kathy was an inveterate supporter of her various charities. She chaired the Alexandra Rose project, raised funds for the YWCA and was a council member of the Royal Albert Hall and an early campaigner for Motability, providing transport for the disabled. Her cheerful disposition and ever helpful attitude will be missed by all who had the fortune to meet her.

PLANNING and CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Carol Seymour-Newton

SOUTH KENSINGTON STATION



Looking north from Onslow Gardens – existing – showing the Victorian character of the area



Looking north from Onslow Gardens – proposed

The highly controversial redevelopment devised by developers Native Land in partnership with TfL and designed by architects Rogers Stirk Harbour finally went to RBKC's Planning Committee on November 18th last year. At the end of a three hour meeting devoted solely to this one agenda item the Planning Committee unanimously voted to turn the scheme down.

The case for the objectors was led by Ward Councillor Greg Hammond ably supported by Ben Oakley from SAVE Britain's Heritage and Julian Lloyd Webber, a long standing South Kensington resident together with other residents some of whom would lose their homes and businesses should the scheme go ahead. The Planning Committee agreed that the development was inappropriate in the Conservation Area of which South Kensington Station forms the heart. Not only was the scheme massively overscaled and destructive of historic fabric, it did not

provide step-free access to all underground lines. As objectors have consistently pointed out, it is hard to see what public benefit this massive development scheme would bring.

TfL and Native Land can still appeal the decision which would lead to an expensive and time consuming public inquiry. However, in the new year Cllr Johnny Thalassites, Lead Member for Planning, Place and Environment, wrote to TfL following a recent TfL public consultation exercise to identify stations needing step-free access, to offer TfL £7.5m in RBKC funding towards the provision of step-free access at South Kensington.

Let's hope that TfL finally starts to listen and take note of what local people have been saying for years, namely that step-free access can – and should – be provided at South Kensington (as it has been at countless other stations) on the network without massive unsympathetic development.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

THE PENINSULA.



Construction of the Peninsula London hotel and residences continues apace. This Spring, two 120-year old Japanese maple trees were planted in the inner garden courtyard of the hotel – a milestone that was celebrated with a Shinto blessing to protect the trees, welcome future guests and reflect the Asian heritage of the brand.

This Summer will see the beginning of the fit out for the three signature restaurants and The Peninsula Spa.

The hotel, which will open to guests from early in 2023, will showcase the best of British culture, art and cuisine. There will be 190 guest rooms and suites in addition to which there will be exclusive luxury residences for sale. A one-story shopping arcade facing Hye Park Corner and the Wellington Arch will provide nine retail shops featuring many luxury brands.

THE KNIGHTSBRIDGE ESTATE

Much of the façade along Brompton Road has now been revealed except for the building where the new entrance to Knightsbridge tube is due to open later this year, which is still hidden behind hoarding. Pedestrians will soon be able to access the beautifully restored Hooper's Court passageway, linking Brompton Road and Sloane Street, towards the end of summer.

The shell and core of the new building reached practical completion at the beginning of the year.



The Knightsbridge Estate courtyard

The new apartments which are arranged around an attractive open courtyard garden, will be available in early 2023 and sit above the new office at One Hooper's Court and the new shops facing onto Sloane Street and Brompton Road. The office space at One Hooper's Court is currently being marketed. Burberry are already installed in their flagship store on the corner of Sloane Street and Brompton Road and we understand the second of the retail units is currently being fitted out with the, as yet, unnamed occupier due to open in the summer.

Opening of the two new Knightsbridge Tube entrances has been delayed. The Brompton Road entrance will now open in late 2022, but due to one of the core contractors going into administration earlier this year, opening of the stepfree access in Hooper's Court will now not take place until Summer 2023.



55-91 KNIGHTSBRIDGE

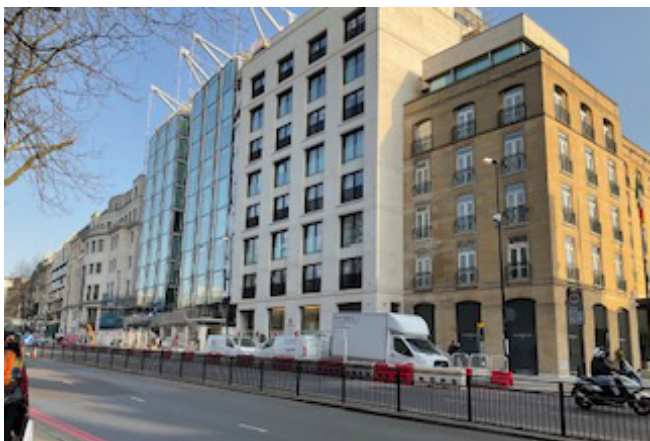
The residential apartments within this beautifully restored frontage on the south side of Knightsbridge were completed in December and it is anticipated that the launch will take place at the beginning of April as the newsletter goes to press. Marketing for the retail units and offices began last Autumn.

Getting approval for the proposed environmental improvements for William Street is complicated by the fact that no less than three authorities have to agree any changes – both local councils, Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea, and TfL are involved.

So far two Key Stages of the proposed works have been completed. The Key Stage 3 was submitted to the authorities at the end of March.

Subject to approvals from all parties it is anticipated that works could begin in June and be completed in September this year.

THE BERKELEY including 33–39 Knightsbridge



The proposals for extending the building at roof level, which were shown to the KA in the Autumn, finally crystallised in March with the submission of a planning application. A further presentation of the plans to members of the committee is due to take place in April.

Meanwhile the exterior of the new building at 33 and 35 Knightsbridge, with its eccentric crane like structures overhanging the roof, is virtually complete.

OTHER NEWS

2–8 RUTLAND GATE



Plans for the alterations and extensions to, and refurbishment of 2–8 Rutland Gate, bought several years ago for a reputed £210million are, we are told, under review due to volatile global economic circumstances. The agents have promised to get back to us as soon as they are in a position to do so.

LANCELOT PLACE

Nos 3–11



Works are at last underway at this site. Borehole drilling and initial ground works are currently under way to prepare for the installation of a ground source heat pump.

Works have also been taking place to realign the site hoarding ahead of the delivery of on-site welfare cabins. Works for the foundation of the new houses are expected to begin in May.

Meanwhile an application for a number of changes has been submitted to WCC which includes amendments to the materials proposed for the elevations, changes to the glazing and windows and moving the third basement floor basement plant room further from the properties in Trevor Square.

The developers are circulating local residents with regular updates.

No 15 and 1 TREVOR WALK

Work is continuing on this site at the top of Lancelot Place.

STORM EUNICE

On Friday 18 February Storm Eunice took its toll across the country. The Mayor for London issued a red warning and advised people not to travel; The Royal Parks closed

The Royal Parks



as wind speeds of up to 70 mph destroyed some 150 trees; the O2 Arena had to shut as part of the roof was ripped off. More locally, one tree in Ennismore Gardens (above) was blown down, and garden square lawns were littered with branches and twigs.

EXHIBITION ROAD CULTURAL GROUP

Emily Candler, Executive Director

SUMMER IN SOUTH KENSINGTON

It is great to see our cultural and educational organisations returning to full activities at last. The museums have their Lates back, there is the lovely sight of excited school groups, and Super String Sunday returns to Royal College of Music on 1 May.

The biggest event of the summer is the Great Exhibition Road Festival, returning for a large scale event for the first time since 2019. Taking place in Exhibition Road and surrounding venues, the Festival on 18-19 June is a celebration of the arts and sciences, with free activity for all ages from Imperial College, Royal Albert Hall, the national museums and many more. This year's theme is Trailblazers – exploring the pioneering ideas, people and communities that are changing our world with a weekend of free events for all ages celebrating science and the arts. The Festival will be a chance to explore the extraordinary as we celebrate London's trailblazing innovators, scientists, artists and designers and the everyday heroes who inspire us all. Visitors can enjoy hands-on creative workshops, fascinating

talks, performances and installations from our iconic South Kensington museums, research and culture organisations. To get updates for the Festival and a guide to the 'latest' Festival year-around digital events programme, visit www.greatexhibitionroadfestival.co.uk.

Building on the success of last summer's South Ken Green Trail, which brought temporary architectural sculptures and planting to Exhibition Road, Discover South Kensington is developing plans for temporary art installations in this summer inspired by work by Imperial College scientists. This will form part of the Kensington and Chelsea Public Art Trail which launches across the Borough on 17 June.

Discover South Kensington are also supporting the Team London Ambassadors who will be making a return to Exhibition Road for the four weekends of the EUROs tournament in July and then during the summer holidays until 4th September. These volunteers in their distinctive pink waistcoats do a great service welcoming people and helping them find their way around the area. And while there are new recruits each year, there are also many who have been volunteering here since 2012.

Discover South Kensington is hosting a new series of exclusive events specifically for local neighbours. These events are designed to be a chance to go behind the scenes and experience some of the extraordinary venues and exhibitions, at quieter times, which take place here in London's home of arts and science. The first event at the Science Museum on 1 March was very popular and included an opportunity to visit the stunning Amazonia exhibition of photographs by Sebastio Selgado. Craig Hassall, Chief Executive of Royal Albert Hall and Dr Julia Knights, Deputy Director of the Science Museum welcomed guests and it was an opportunity to connect with neighbours and meet people working across the cultural and educational institutions. There will be more events coming soon. If you would like to be added to the invitation list, please email sara-jane@exhibitionroad.com or sign up to our fortnightly newsletter at www.discoversouthken.com.

NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM'S
URBAN NATURE PROJECT

From the Museum



The Central Ramp leading to Exhibition Road and the tunnel to the tube station – cgi

remains. That's why we were excited to be working with the Museum of London Archaeology team (MOLA) who dug two archaeological trenches and drilled five boreholes in February 2022 to explore what might be left below the surface. The trenches revealed some interesting finds from the foundations for the 1862 International Exhibition Hall. Fortunately these finds will not to delay plans for the gardens redevelopment.

Work continues on the two new weather-proof dinosaur casts that will sit in pride of place in the new gardens. We will have a new bronze cast of our Diplodocus as well as a smaller species of dinosaur called Hypsilophodon installed permanently in the gardens when they open next summer.

Together with The Prince's Trust and other partner organisations we have developed a tailor-made toolkit to help Youth Workers engage young people with urban nature, which is now available on the NHM website.

Explore: Urban Nature, our landmark schools engagement programme, has continued at pace. The national teacher training course began in February 2022 with over 140 teachers signed up from across the country.

On 25th April the Museum hosts a special event *Meet The Neighbours* in support of the Urban Nature Project. Three expert photographers and a Museum scientist will explore our often complex relationship with foxes and other urban wildlife. You can donate via the Museum website to join the event either online or in the Museum.

For further information: www.nhm.ac.uk

There will be a full feature article on the Museum's Urban Nature Project in the KA's 2022 Annual Report.



The West Lawn - cgi

The Museum is transforming its gardens into a welcoming, accessible, biologically diverse green space, as part of a movement across the country with schools, partners and other museums to celebrate and better understand urban nature. Great progress has been made in selecting a main contractor for the Museum's five-acre garden redevelopment. Major works will be starting in the gardens from July 2022 for 12 months.

Our gardens are right on top of an area that's been identified as having potential for historic



© Angus Thomas

Imperial College President, Alice Gast, and Philanthropist David Dangoor CBE at the official opening of the Dangoor Plaza

The new Dangoor Plaza, the redefined central area on the South Kensington Campus, was officially opened in late November by Imperial College President, Alice Gast, and Philanthropist David Dangoor CBE. This year a bronze artwork by Anthony Gormley will take its place alongside the plaza.

Meanwhile the 135-year-old Queen's Tower is currently fenced off and out of bounds to the public. Getting the tower fit for the next 135 or more years is a major undertaking. Repair works will commence in the Summer.

© Angus Thomas



Grade II listed in 1970, the tower is the last surviving element of the original Imperial Institute building designed by Thomas E. Colcutt and constructed between 1887-1893 in the eclectic Renaissance manner. It is built of Portland Stone with brick bands and topped with a copper dome. Alterations were made in the 1960s to stabilise the tower as a freestanding structure, following the

demolition of the main body of the Imperial Institute building, originally opened by Queen Victoria in 1893.

SERPENTINE SUMMER PAVILION 2022

Artist Theaster Gates is the first artist to be asked to design the Summer Pavilion. Architectural support will be provided by Adjaye Associates. Black Chapel draws inspiration from the architectural typologies of chapels and the great pottery kilns of Stoke-



on-Trent. Gates' Serpentine Pavilion 2022 is part of The Question of Clay, a multi-institution project by the artist taking place in 2021 and 2022 across Whitechapel Gallery, White Cube, Serpentine and the V&A. The project seeks to investigate the making, labour and production of clay, as well as collecting history, through exhibitions, performance and live interventions. The Question of Clay aims to generate new knowledge, meaning and connections about this material.

LICENSING REPORT

Paul Meitner

My last two reports referred to a continuation of the return to normal life, which has translated into a steady increase in the number of licensing applications in both of our boroughs. This trend has continued in the last six months, meaning more applications that need to be reviewed – and more objections that need to be lodged.

The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea (“RBKC”) issued an updated Licensing Policy last year, which is due to run until 2026 - although there is a precedent for updates being made before then. One of our concerns about the new policy is that there are no ‘core hours’ for either licensed activities or the placing of tables and chairs on pavements. This means that we (and any other concerned parties) have to go back to ‘first principles’ and rely on the core grounds set out in the Licensing Act 2003 for objecting to applications. These core grounds are the Prevention of Crime and Disorder, Public Safety, Prevention of Public Nuisance and the Protection of Children from harm.

RBKC has also recently issued an update on the outcome of its consultations on Al Fresco Dining in the borough. Between 16 November and 31 December 2021 133 responses were submitted to the consultation, of which 70% were in support of the al-fresco dining. In summary, the outdoor dining policy has been extended, once the legislation ends this September, to run on annual basis during British Summertime only.

Here is a brief update on the main licensing applications since the last newsletter.

SHEESH 70 BROMPTON ROAD (Formerly Top Shop)

As you may recall this was an application for a restaurant with private dining rooms in the basement, restaurant / holding bar on the ground floor with members / diners’ lounge and restaurant, all on the first floor at the former Top Shop site. We lodged a strongly worded objection, based on the proposed deviation from Core Hours, the proposed non-standard conditions and the lack of meaningful consultation with Residents’



70 Brompton Road

Associations (RAs). We were ably supported by numerous objections from individual residents, many of whom lived immediately adjacent to the premises. Following a Licensing Hearing on 16 December 2021 the application was rejected by Westminster City Council. Our particular thanks are due to Richard Brown of Westminster Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) for his input and advice. It is possible that the applicant may appeal against the refusal, in which case we will update members.

CHAPATI AND KARAK, 144 BROMPTON ROAD

As with Sheesh, we referred to this application in the Autumn 2021 Newsletter, as it involved the placing of tables and chairs on the pavement until 10.30 p.m. on weekdays, on one of the busiest sections of the Brompton Road. We lodged an objection, citing two of the requirements of the Licensing Act 2003 – public safety, specifically, the consequent obstruction to the flow of pedestrians and the risk of accidents arising as a result of people walking off the pavement into a busy main road, and public nuisance (late night noise from patrons). Unfortunately, the application was granted.

CHAIWALA, 241 BROMPTON ROAD

This application involved an extension of opening times to 24 hours a day, one of the most



concerning we have seen in recent years. If granted it would have resulted in significantly more noise and antisocial behaviour and set a worrying precedent. The pavement outside the premises is already busy in the late evening and summer months; the additional hours would have meant that it was clogged with vehicles dropping off and picking up patrons through the night. Furthermore, the hours applied for were in clear breach of the RBKC Statement of Licensing Policy, which states that “premises hours.... will not normally be granted which permit opening hours later than 12 Midnight”. So, we lodged a strong objection, as did several others, including RBKC’s Environmental Health Officer and the

Egerton Gardens Mews Residents Association. In response, the applicant agreed to scale back the terminal hour to Midnight (except during the holy months of Ramadan and Eid, when it would be 1 a.m.) and to accept recommendations from Environmental Health, on condition that we withdrew our objections. As we were not prepared to do this the application will go to a full hearing in front of the RBKC Licensing Committee, at a date to be determined.

ORIENTAL CANTEEN, 2A EXHBITION ROAD

This application, for the placing of 11 tables, 22 chairs and 3 planters on the pavement, each day of the week, did not include any dimensions on the plans submitted to RBKC and could have resulted in the whole footway being blocked by tables and chairs, blocking the flow of pedestrians on one of the busiest pavements in the area. We lodged an objection in support of our two neighbouring RAs, on the grounds of public safety and nuisance. Although the application was granted the number of tables permitted was reduced to 6 (from the 11 applied for) and the number of chairs to 12 (from 22), with no planters allowed. This is a result, of sorts.

LAW AND ORDER REPORT

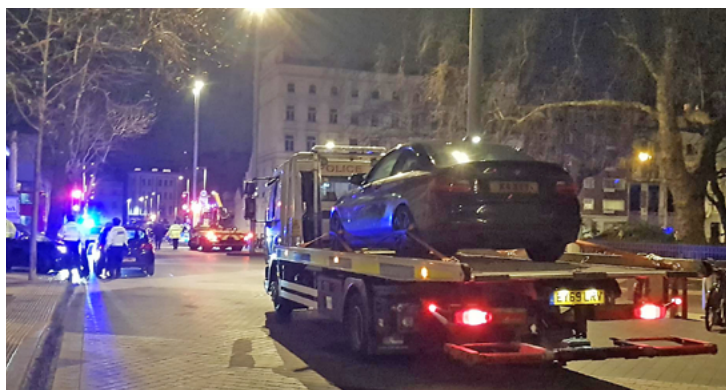
Frances Blois

ORGANISATION OF THE COMMITTEE

During lockdown the Committee did not meet in person which gave an opportunity for a reorganisation instigated by Samer Younis including responsibilities for different areas summarised as follows: Liaison Meetings with the Westminster and RBKC areas of the Knightsbridge Association as well as the Royal Parks, Heads of Security such as Harrods and other Institutions and large businesses. Neighbourhood Watch Areas, Legislation Watch such as pedicabs and e-scooters and finally publications and media. If anyone is interested in being involved please let me know. (francesblois@aol.com)

SUPER CARS

For many years these car meets have kept residents awake. A very successful operation was held in mid – January with a Police general stop site a



short distance away from Exhibition Road which was the assumed location. Their arrival at Exhibition Road was 11.50pm. Section 59 warnings which were issued can result in seizure of the vehicle. It is hoped that this disruption will stop future meets in Exhibition Road and the new Acoustic Cameras will result in fines.



PCs Brown and Scott – the Safer Neighbourhood Team

KNIGHTSBRIDGE AND BELGRAVIA SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD PANEL

This panel, which also includes Belgravia met at the beginning of March again online. The crime stats are presented and are also available on the Police websites where you also can report crimes as well as see where drop-in meetings are being held. All contact details for the local teams are there including both the Westminster Council – Knightsbridge and Belgravia Safer Neighbourhood Team and the RBKC – Brompton and Hans Town Team. Both these teams cover the Knightsbridge Association area. www.met.police.uk There is often concern that these teams are not seen on the streets but in the event of an actual incident in progress dial 999.

CRIME FIGURES STATISTICS

The Crime figures have increased following the start of a return to normal, although are much

lower than in other areas, e-scooters are being used in some cases illegally for watch and phone snatches.

THEFT FROM CARS

Unfortunately theft from cars is still occurring and takes seconds

to accomplish. **Please do not leave anything valuable in your vehicle.**

THEFT OF CARS

This is usually keyless high value cars stolen to order and they are usually out of the country before the theft is reported. A crook lock attached to the steering wheel is a deterrent.

THEFT FROM PERSON

With the opening up of the cafés and more people around these will increase. Please look after your personal belongings when you are away from home.

SCAMS

Scams are now becoming much more frequent and are something that cannot be dealt with on the streets. Please be vigilant. If something seems too good to be true, it probably is.

LOCAL SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAMS

WESTMINSTER RESIDENTS

KNIGHTSBRIDGE and BELGRAVIA WARD
(under Belgravia on the police websites)

Email: knightsbridge.belgravia.SNT@met.police.uk
Tel: 020 7321 9292
Mobile: 07769 164 785 (not 24 hrs)

RBKC RESIDENTS

BROMPTON and HANS TOWN CLUSTER
(under Knightsbridge on the police websites)

Email: Brompton.SNT@met.police.uk
Tel: 020 7161 8982
Mobile: 07768 178 122

Other useful links to note are:

Police websites www.met.police.uk and www.police.uk

Action Fraud www.actionfraud.police.uk

Call 101 if you require non-emergency police assistance

Contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 if you wish to supply anonymous information.

IN AN EMERGENCY ALWAYS CALL 999

TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Chris Barrass and Simon Birkett

GAS LAMPS

Like Concorde, where it became impractical to get the parts needed to keep the planes flying, it is becoming hard to keep the historic gas lamps in Montpelier Walk and Rutland Gate, not least when gas and other fossil fuels are being phased out. Despite this, we are keen to keep their heritage character so are exploring whether we could apply for some of the neighbourhood portion of the Community Infrastructure Levy or other funding to be used to replace them as close as possible like for like with gas-effect LED lanterns of suitable brightness and tone.



ELECTRIC CHARGING POINTS

In another sign of the times, demand for on-street charging of electric vehicles is increasing sharply as more and more residents choose them. In fact, Westminster City Council has issued over 100 'Eco' permits in Knightsbridge which offer 100% discount on the Residents parking permit if a vehicle is classified within one of the following groups: electric; gas; hybrid; and fuel cell. Unfortunately, Westminster has reached the local limit for lamp post charging (5.5kW or eight hour) because Knightsbridge has fewer large street lamps (with sufficient internal space to fit the wiring etc) and some residents have blocked the charging points when they do not need them. The KA has supported three solutions from the Council: the first is to change a few residents parking bays to resident only electric vehicle parking bays in Ennismore Gardens, Prince Consort Road, Princes Gardens, Rutland Gate and Trevor Place; the second is the proposed installation of 'fast' chargers in Montpelier Street and Ennismore Gardens (22kW or two hour); and the third is a 'rapid' charging point in Prince Consort Road (50kw for 30 to 60 minutes). Ennismore

Gardens will be the biggest beneficiary. These should be installed in the next few weeks. For details, see <https://www.zap-map.com/>. We are discussing options with WCC for more and/or faster charging points.

FOOTBRIDGE

The KA was asked for a view on a possible pedestrian footbridge up steps from Wilton Place and then horizontally over the Knightsbridge carriageway to South Carriage Drive. The P&C and T&E committees both looked at it and felt that it would detract from the townscape view to and from Hyde Park Corner. Pedestrians and cyclists are already able to cross the carriageway at Albert Gate and Hyde Park Corner.

VISION FOR HYDE PARK CORNER

The KA was also asked to consider an idea to 'transform' Hyde Park Corner as Trafalgar Square was a few years ago. There is no suggestion that it would be used as commercial space. It is a bold vision, which has obvious attractions, but we said we needed to know much more about the possible impact on traffic flows and congestion including back into Knightsbridge. Other ideas are floated for Marble Arch and the southbound carriageway of Park Lane where our same concerns would apply.

SOUTH CARRIAGE DRIVE AND PARK LANE

The KA wrote to the Royal Parks and Transport for London last year to promote our compromise proposal to move the segregated cycle lane from Park Lane to the Broad Walk in Hyde Park to free up space for vehicles in Park Lane. As reported at the KA AGM in January 2022, the Royal Parks responded negatively but TfL said they were grateful for our comments and would consider them as part of its broader consideration over the scheme's future later this year. Any proposals on the scheme will be subject to full public consultation. We also raised a number of other points with the Royal Parks, such as West Carriage Drive, but their response was similarly negative.

PAINTING OF BLACK STREET FURNITURE



We are grateful to our three local councillors for approving the use of about £30,000 from 'Ward budget funds' to paint all the black street furniture across our area, other than in TfL and privately managed roads such as the Imperial College London estate, in the first few months of this year. Westminster's contractors, FM Conway, did an excellent job and were fortunate with enough dry weather. Melissa Woolford submitted the application and was helped latterly by Simon Birkett. It has given Knightsbridge a welcome face lift and the anti-flyposting paint should help to keep things looking good.

WASTE AND RECYCLING

Thank you to everyone who is putting their rubbish and recycling out as late as possible before collection times and reporting bags dumped out of hours using the FixMyStreet.com app. Your efforts, combined with hard work every day by Veolia, Westminster's street cleansing contractors, have noticeably improved our area over the last three years. A few serial offenders remain, often in rented properties, but Veolia is working hard to address them through persuasion and enforcement action where necessary.

Dog poo remains an ongoing problem. One heroic Veolia manager removed over 100 dog poo bags or worse in a typical two week period and disinfected each location. This is an unacceptable problem. As bad, it's no joke if you

step in dog poo at night or when not carefully navigating every step on the pavement. Perhaps it's time for a Public Space Protection Order for dog fouling in Knightsbridge as already in force in Queen's Park Ward, Churchill Estate and Victoria Plaza. Concerned residents can report 'Dog fouling' with one or more photos and anonymously submit evidence of offenders using the FixMyStreet app. The law states that being unaware that a dog has fouled or not having a suitable bag is not a reasonable excuse.

In other developments, our three local Councillors have used 'Ward budget funds' to deep clean the pavements along Brompton Road and Montpelier Street. Ward budgets are an initial budget of £46,000 per year allocated to each ward which councillors can spend flexibly on projects within their wards that would benefit local residents or organisations. They can roll over each year across a four year electoral cycle.

E-SCOOTERS

Rental electric scooters (e-scooters) are still the only way to legally ride an e-scooter on public roads or in other public places within London.



TfL and 10 boroughs are running a trial e-scooter hire scheme until June 2022. They may then modify it, cancel it or make it permanent. The trial scheme requires riders to be aged 18 or over, have a driving licence and complete in-app training before their first ride. Hired e-scooters are speed-limited to 12.5mph and should slow or stop in certain restricted areas.

The scheme has proved popular with users but their silence, speed and teething problems have unnerved others. The KA supports the scheme generally but has flagged concerns about these issues and poor parking arrangements. We await further news

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Local Government elections take place in May.

CONSULTATIONS

There have been a number of these in the past few months.

Westminster City Council has published its new Environmental Supplementary Planning Document (ESPD) and new Code of Construction Practice – setting out ambitious plans to place sustainability at the heart of

the built environment in Westminster.

The ESPD provides guidance for developers on how they can meet the environmental policies within Westminster’s City Plan 2019–2040, which was adopted last year. It will ensure the highest possible proportion of development requiring planning permission achieves net zero carbon emissions.

RBKC is currently consulting on a review of their Local Plan.

SUMMER EVENTS

LONDON SQUARE OPEN GARDENS WEEKEND 11 and 12 June

Organised by The London Gardens Trust, this year’s event will unlock over 100 secret and hidden gardens to the general public, including a few new additions from across the capital.

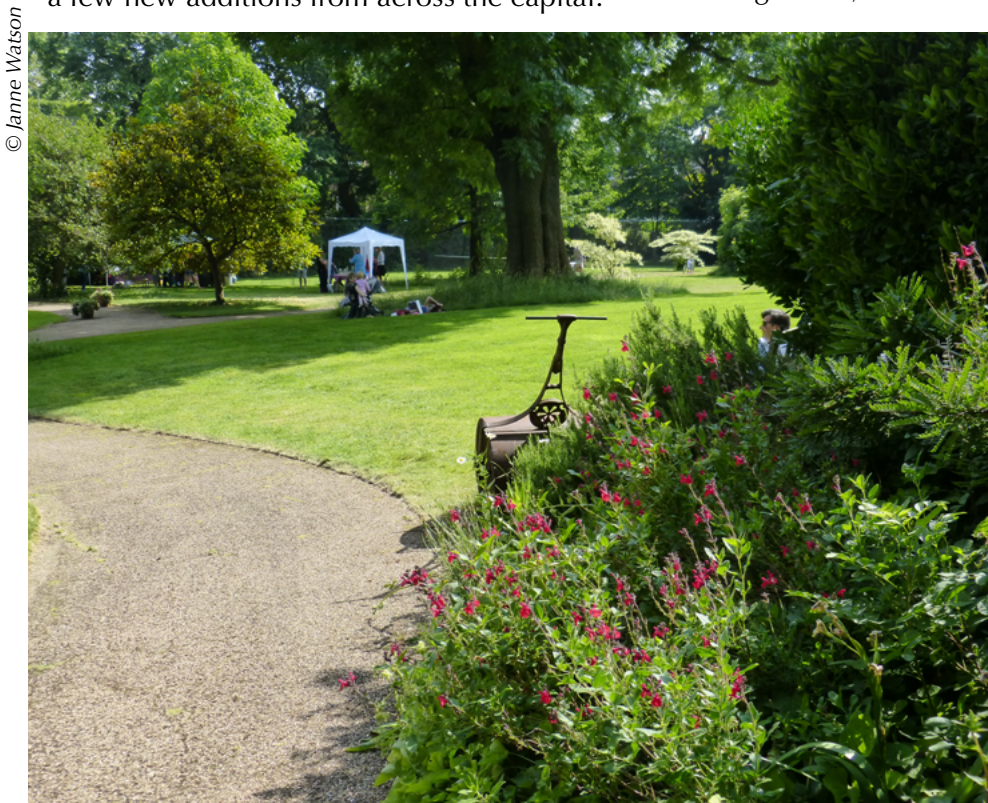
Now in its 22nd year, after a break due to the pandemic, London Square Open Gardens Weekend showcases a range of green spaces from the historic and traditional to the new and experimental and includes private and rooftop gardens, community allotments and secret sites

nestled between some of the city’s best known historic buildings. Five new sites are opening their doors this year.

Most gardens are never open to the public and profits from ticket sales will go towards helping the London Gardens Trust protect some of the city’s most valuable green spaces.

The London Square Open Gardens Weekend guided walks will also be back.

Further information and tickets are available from their website: www.londongardenstrust.org/log2022



Edwardes Square

© Janne Watson



Ennismore Gardens

Participating squares locally: Ennismore Gardens, Rutland Gate South, Thurloe Square. Check opening days and times.

THE GREAT EXHIBITION ROAD FESTIVAL 18–19 June

For details see pp.6 and 7.

NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM 25 April

Meet The Neighbours You can join the event by searching Natural History Museum Meet the Neighbours.

THE ROYAL PARKS

THE ROYAL PARKS CONCERTS

The British Summer Time concerts return to the parade ground in Hyde Park over consecutive weekends in June/July bookending a number of free activities and entertainment during the weekend programme. Among the many leading stars to feature are Elton John, The Rolling Stones, Adele and Duran Duran.

For this year's schedule all nine of their existing licenses will be used making up a total of nine concerts over three consecutive weekends at the end of June early July:

The Schedule

Friday 24 – Sunday 26 June

Friday 1 – Sunday 3 July

Friday 8 – Sunday 10 July

Construction:

Friday 10 June – Thursday 23 June

Breaking down:

Monday 11 July – Monday 18 July

It will all be cleared away by Wednesday 20 July.



OTHER EVENTS

Both Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens offer a number guided walking tours and events for children throughout the year.

For instance, on 23rd April there will be a fascinating walking tour of the Albert Memorial going beyond the railings, getting a closer look at the Frieze of Parnassus and other fine



details. In addition to their scheduled events and walks, they have a number of self-guided ways to explore the parks. Details can be found at royalparks.org.uk

KNIGHTSBRIDGE ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

Our 60th Anniversary celebration, much postponed, was finally due to take place on Monday 10 January at the Mandarin Oriental, but with the uncertainty surrounding the pandemic, and the nervousness of people about attending events, it was decided to postpone it once again.

For the same reasons, the 2021/2022 AGM was again held via Zoom.



We very much hope that both the 60th (by that time 62nd) anniversary celebration and AGM 2022/23 will be held in person – details to be announced.

USEFUL NUMBERS

Noise: WCC **0207641 2000**

RBKC **0207361 3002**

The Parks: **0300 061 2222**

USEFUL CONTACTS

WCC Knightsbridge/Belgravia
Ward Councillors

Cllr. Tony Devenish tony.devenish@london.gov.uk
(Tony is also our GLATfL member)

Cllr. Rachael Robathan rrobathan@westminster.gov.uk

Cllr. Elizabeth Hitchcock ehitchcock@westminster.gov.uk

REPORT A FAULT

www.fixmystreet.com is an excellent way to report faults re lighting, pavements, potholes, blocked gulleys etc and works for both Councils.

RBKC Brompton and Hans Town
Ward Councillors

Cllr. Mary Weale Cllr.mary.weale@rbkc.gov.uk

Cllr. Walaa Idris Cllr.walaa.idris@rbkc.gov.uk

Cllr. Sof McVeigh Cllr.sof.mcveigh@rbkc.gov.uk

All information correct at the time of going to press. Please check websites