

THE KNIGHTSBRIDGE ASSOCIATION

**6 Montpelier Street, London SW7 1EZ
Tel: 020: 7823 9103 Fax: 020 7581 3130**

NEWSLETTER

June 2001

This is a brief note to bring members up-to-date on some of the main topics the Committees have been dealing with during the past few months

1. **HARRODS HELIPAD** – Following the Planning Enquiry in July last year, the Inspector upheld Harrods' position that no planning permission was necessary for the chairman's personal use of the roof as a helipad. His decision was overruled by the Secretary of State for the Environment and Harrods has lodged a further Appeal with the High Court which will be considered on 18th/19th July.
2. **HARRODS DEPOSITORY TREVOR SQUARE & 100 BROMPTON ROAD**
Planning approval has been given for conversion of the Depository into 39 flats and three town houses with entrances off Trevor Square and two houses in Montpelier Mews. As part of the development, Trevor House (100 Brompton Road) will be demolished and replaced by a modern office block with retail on the lower floors.
3. **195 - 199 KNIGHTSBRIDGE** – Demolition of this 60s office block will be completed by mid-July. Construction will follow immediately and will be completed during 2003. The new building will contain 189 flats and 15 mews houses or maisonettes. In addition to 165 parking spaces for residents of the building a further 78 spaces will be available to local residents.
4. **1 KNIGHTSBRIDGE GREEN** – Refurbishment of this building by the Prudential continues and tenants are being sought for the parade of shops on the Brompton Road frontage. Detailed designs are in hand for upgrading the open space at Knightsbridge Green, which links in well with the Knightsbridge Initiative.
5. **THE KNIGHTSBRIDGE INITIATIVE** – Improvements to the raised pavement area between 132-188 Brompton Road have now been completed and have been hailed a success. This was a joint venture between the Association, local businesses and the Royal Borough. Proposals for stage 2 – the raised pavement between 106-130 Brompton Road – have been submitted by the Association to Westminster City Council who have informed us that responsibility for this major thoroughfare has now passed to the Mayor for London, and the Council will refer the matter to him.
6. **THE ROYAL ALBERT HALL** – Reconstruction of the South Steps and Terraces has been completed and the statue of Prince Albert was rededicated by Prince Philip on 2nd May. Consultation on the final treatment of the precinct continues and assurances have been given that there will be no overall loss of residents' parking spaces.
7. **ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY** – Planning permission has been given for the pavilion on the Exhibition Road frontage. Provision for the extension of storage facilities for their valuable archives under the garden is included. The lecture theatre will also be refurbished.
8. **IMPERIAL COLLEGE** – Following a generous donation from a former student, part of the **Exhibition Road** frontage is to be redeveloped to provide new accommodation for the Business Management School. Plans include demolition of the small 'portacabin-style' building abutting the Royal School of Mines. The contemporary

design by Foster & Partners has been submitted to the City Council. It received a generally favourable reaction from members of our Imperial College sub-committee.

Proposals for the conversion of **Montpelier Hall** - the hostel in Montpelier Street - into 18 flats with underground parking accessed from Montpelier Mews - are still with the City Council's Planning Committee. Planning permission would be subject to a traffic control system for the Mews entrance and agreement on the Council's affordable housing policy. There is no further news on the proposed **Sports Hall** above the swimming pool in Princes Gardens. This is believed to be due to lack of funding.

9. **KNIGHTSBRIDGE TUBE STATION** - The new entrance in Hans Crescent is now in use though a great deal of work remains to be done on the finishes to the entrance and concourse. Meanwhile Hans Crescent, between Brompton Road and Basil Street is still closed to traffic. Consultation will take place shortly on whether pedestrianisation should become permanent.
10. **THE ROYAL PARKS** - In **Kensington Gardens** the metal clad building in front of the **Serpentine Gallery** is a temporary pavilion designed by Daniel Libeskind, architect of the V & A "Spiral". More **concerts and public events** are planned for this summer, and the Association has again drawn attention to the harm these events can do to the fabric of the Parks and the nuisance of noise travelling beyond the boundaries of the Parks. In spite of objections from Amenity Societies and users of **Kensington Gardens**, the Royal Parks Agency has succumbed to pressures to designate a **cycle route** linking Bayswater Road to Mount Gate near to the Serpentine Gallery. It is to be carefully monitored during a six-month trial period. **Free half hour electric buggy rides** are provided for the elderly and disabled on weekdays, May to October only, by the Hyde Park Appeal Liberty Drives (contact **Adam Nicoll** on 07767 498 096). **The Dell and the Rose Garden** at Hyde Park Corner are looking especially beautiful this summer and well worth a visit.
11. **HYDE PARK CORNER** - English Heritage having completed the refurbishment of the Wellington Arch sought the comments of the Association on a scheme to upgrade the surrounding area. Proposals involve remodelling the contours, improvements to the station entrances and planting trees and shrubs to insulate the area from the surrounding traffic. The Association supported the scheme provided no funding demands were made on the already overstretched finances of the Royal Parks. **Wellington Arch** is now open to the public and has a visitor centre.
12. **ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART, Kensington Gore** - Architect Nicholas Grimshaw has designed an **ellipse**, an exciting extension to the existing building, linked to it by a service core serving both structures. This will provide much needed up-to-date studios, a new public exhibition space and a world-class centre for art and design research. The initial proposals have been welcomed by members of our committee who attended a presentation. A planning application will be with the City Council before the end of the year.

13. **V & A MUSEUM** – Daniel Libeskind’s “Spiral” building appears to be on hold while the museum and the architect consider ways to reduce costs. The refurbishment of the British Galleries continues and should be completed by the end of the year.
14. **NEW STRUCTURES FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT** – After consultation, both Westminster City Council and the Royal Borough have opted for a Leader and Cabinet system.
15. **TRAFFIC & PARKING** – **Congestion charging** is the main topic of this committee at present. All kinds of reservations have been raised about the details. The Mayor seems bent on introducing it as soon as possible but there appear to be many obstacles in the way. Both local authorities are opposed to it in principle.
16. **LAW & ORDER** – The committee is concentrating on reviving the **Neighbourhood Watch** scheme and is looking for volunteers to help. If you are interested, please contact Iain Walker on 7584 6307.
17. **CLEANSING** – The Association with other amenity groups has been invited to make suggestions for improving the standard of collections, street sweeping and recycling when Westminster draws up its new five-year contract for tender.
18. **STREETLIGHTING** – In Westminster the high rate of failure and interminable delays in carrying out repairs continue to dog the Knightsbridge ward. The Council has acknowledged the situation and is according the highest priority to rectifying the present operational and administrative failures.
19. **SOCIAL EVENTS** – Tea and a visit to the Guildhall in May was followed ten days later by a reception at the Polish Club prior to an excellent lecture by John Bly of Antique Roadshow fame at the V & A. Suggestions for future events and venues would be welcome.
20. **SUBSCRIPTIONS** – Please make sure that you have renewed your subscription and/or that your Banker’s Order is up-to-date.

Single:	£10
Couples / Families	£15
Corporate	£40
21. **NEW MEMBERS** – Please help us to recruit new members by telling them about the Association. We will send details if you give us names and addresses.
22. **HISTORY OF KNIGHTSBRIDGE** – A few copies of *Knightsbridge* are still available from the Hon. Secretary. Please ring 020 7823 9103.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
of THE KNIGHTSBRIDGE ASSOCIATION
Will be held on Monday 10th December 2001 at 6pm
In the Concert Hall of the Royal College of Music Prince Consort Road