

Spring 2000 Newsletter

Please note that the newsletters contain un-edited extracts which have not been updated

Chairman's Message

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2000. As we enter the 21st century, there have never been so many pressures upon our crowded borough - not least the possible redevelopment of the town centre, the Government's policies on brownfield sites and the inexorable rise in traffic. There is a separate piece elsewhere in the newsletter on the town centre plans - I'm sure that it's right for the Society to be working on the inside of the Forum influencing the proposals being considered, (hopefully reflecting your views) rather than on the outside where our input would be far weaker. But we shall remain vigilant and would not hesitate to leave the Forum if we felt that our views were not being given the due weight they deserved.

But we mustn't forget that the Borough covers not just the centre of Ealing, important though that is: it also contains a number of significant sub-centres, such as Acton, Hanwell and Southall and local shopping centres such as South Ealing/Northfields and Pitshanger Lane. We need to ensure that our views represent all these areas. So, if you know anyone who lives in these areas, or other parts of the borough, who is interested in civic matters and would like to join the Society, please pass their name on to the membership secretary (Ken Corden) who would be delighted to send them an application form. Also, don't forget our website with up-to-date information on local issues and our events.

Finally, our thanks go to Kevin Newson who has edited the newsletter for the last few years, but has reluctantly decided to stand down from the Executive Committee because of work commitments. In his place we welcome John Templeton, who joined the society at the end of last year on retiring from the London Borough of Ealing, and who has very kindly agreed to take over the role of editor.

Bob Gurd, Chairman

EALING TOWN CENTRE

Ealing Council decided in Autumn 1994 to begin the improvement of the Borough's town centres.

In Autumn 1997, following the review of all the other centres, officers reported on the

needs of the Ealing Broadway/West Ealing Centre. The Council then decided to ask the Civic Trust (to which the Civic Society is affiliated) to take the lead in establishing a mechanism for involving the community in an improvement partnership.

Over 700 organisations and businesses were invited to participate and after a series of meetings, workshops and an initial questionnaire, the Ealing Town Centre Forum was formally established as a company limited by guarantee to develop a strategy for the Centre.

The Society's Executive responded positively to this initiative, judging that involvement in planning change was preferable to the expensive and time-consuming confrontation over the seventeen years prior to the opening of the Ealing Broadway Centre in 1984. The Chairman and Secretary attended the Forum from the start and the Secretary became a member of the Forum Board.

So far, the Executive has been pleased to be involved in the:

- appointment of a Town Centre Manager for Ealing Broadway and West Ealing;
 - hiring of Urban Initiatives to undertake a streetscape study and produce a Streetscape Guide;
 - agreement to give priority to the improvement of the Ealing Broadway station forecourt in the next financial year;
 - removal of consideration of the southward expansion of Ealing Broadway Centre from the agenda;
 - insistence by the Council that Ealing Studios remains as a media production site;
 - achievement of government finance to extend CCTV to Springbridge Road car park;
 - support for West Ealing shopping centre which has encouraged the Daniels and Waitrose stores to proceed with improvements; and
 - institution of Christmas lights from Ealing Broadway to West Ealing.
- The Executive is committed to changes that will meet the needs of residents, workers and students, and produce positive environmental improvements over the next decade. In particular, it seeks to make Ealing a more pleasant and safer place for pedestrians and cyclists; conserve individual buildings and parades that give Ealing its distinctive character; to foster high quality new architecture; preserve and enhance green spaces; enhance arts and leisure facilities; create cleaner and less cluttered streets; substantially improve public transport; and ensure better management of traffic flows and parking.

The Society will be vigilant in trying to ensure that, whilst better use is made of vacant land, the 'village' character of Ealing is preserved and traffic restrained so that it doesn't become another Kingston shopping centre.