



EALING CIVIC SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Working to preserve and improve our Borough



Founded in 1967

President: Prof. Sir Peter Hall Vice president: Corinne Templer

www.ealingcivicsociety.org

Member of

**CIVIC
VOICE**

Autumn 2011

Chairman's Message

Thank you to all who made it out to the Northala Fields event in June. Despite uncertain weather those who attended seemed to enjoy the talks and the guided walk around the mounds.

Local Listing

On Civic Day (25 June) we launched the "spot your local gems" campaign which seems to have caught people's imagination and we have had many interesting buildings nominated for local listing. There is still time to nominate a building or structure – go to our website for more details. The Council has taken the local listing exercise to heart and has agreed to consider our nominations for buildings as part of the updating of the local development framework process in the autumn.

They have also agreed to a new procedure for dealing with applications for local listing for threatened buildings in order to avoid a repetition of the loss of 51 Drayton Green.

Westel House

On other planning matters, our appeal to have the application for demolition and redevelopment of Westel House (Uxbridge Road) called in by the Secretary of State for determination unfortunately failed so this development will now proceed.

Cinema Story

The cinema saga continues to rumble on. The Council has decided to give Empire cinemas one last chance to proceed

with the development prior to initiating compulsory purchase procedures in October. Somewhat to everyone's surprise the chief executive of Empire Cinemas, Justin Ribbons, accepted the Council's invitation to appear before the Overview & Scrutiny committee in late July. He said that the latest delay was caused by the fact that they

In common with all who live in and care about Ealing, we were shocked by the recent vandalism and damage to the town centre. The Council (with some public-spirited members of the community) acted with commendable speed over the short-term clear up but it will take time to heal the scars. The Government, Mayor Johnson and London councils need to act together to ensure that there is no repetition of the events which led to the tragic loss of life, livelihoods, shops and homes and which have proved to be so threatening to both the moral and physical fabric of our society. Our concern also has to be that in repairing the damage, such as to the shop window of the nationally listed chemist shop in Haven Green and the locally listed parade of shops in Ealing Green, which could so easily have been totally destroyed, we preserve the attraction of Ealing and do not retreat into a fortress of shutters and bars.

wanted to incorporate an IMAX screen into the development which they believed only needed a non-material amendment to the existing planning permission but this was disputed by the Council who considered that a new application was necessary. It was left that Empire and the Council would have

a further meeting to try to resolve the disagreement.

Acton Town Hall

The Council has recently completed its consultation on the future of the Acton Town Hall site and disappointingly very few of our points (see last newsletter for details) have been taken on board. We shall continue to press the Council to take greater account of the heritage aspects of the buildings, in particular the Assembly Hall and Kings Rooms (adjacent to the 'new' Town Hall building).

Revised Twyford Abbey proposals

An exhibition on new proposals for the Twyford Abbey site was held in July by the current owners Twyford Abbey

Coming events

London Open House weekend 17/18th September (see p. 2 for details)

ECS Guided Heritage Walk Walpole Park: (Sat/Sun 17/18th September and Tuesday 18th October, see p. 2 for details)

Local History Library talk "Iconic factories of West London": Robert Gurd Joint meeting with University of the Third Age. Thursday 13th October, 10.15 am Liz Cantell Room, Ealing Town Hall

The ECS Annual Awards Ceremony: Tuesday 22nd November, 7.30 p.m. Liz Cantell Room, Ealing Town Hall
Speaker: *Torin Douglas*, Media Correspondent, BBC News. Check our website for full details and updates.

Properties Ltd. The Grade II listed Abbey has been empty since the Alexian Fathers vacated the site over 20 years ago and has been on the English Heritage at risk register for many years.

The latest proposals envisage building a new residential development around the walled garden, with the garden itself restored for use by the local community and access to the whole grounds would be permitted. The sale of 225 residential apartments is intended to pay for the restoration and conversion of the Abbey.

The Society remains concerned that any building has to be carried out on metropolitan open land but appreciates that this might be a price that has to be paid for saving the Abbey itself. However, we would wish to be reassured that the absolute minimum of land itself is lost to development. If you want to receive e-mail updates about these issues and other breaking news appearing on our website please e-mail info@ealingcivicsociety.org and ask to be added to our e-mail list.

New station listings

Perivale and West Acton are two stations in the Borough of Ealing of 16 London Underground that have recently been listed Grade II, bringing the total of nationally listed stations in Ealing to nine.

The Great Western Railway opened "Perivale Halt" in 1904



and the current London Underground station was opened in 1947. "In design terms it's the work of Brian Lewis, an Australian who designed several stations for the Central Line [including West Acton]... he bought into the idea of bright open spaces and the station still has an airy feel to it today" (Gareth Edwards, London Reconnections blog). GWR built the Ealing Broadway branch (the western part of the former Ealing & Shepherd's Bush Railway) in 1917, and West Acton station in Noel Road opened in 1923. "Simple, plain lines, no fancy detail. In a way it looks like a cinema. It's a focal point for the local community. Stations like this were built like beacons to attract people to them" (Mike Ashworth, design and heritage manager at London Underground).

Robert Gurd

London Open Houses 17th/18th September

22 Mount Pleasant Road: W5 1SG

Ealing Abbey: Charlbury Grove W5 2DY

Pitzhanger Manor House: Walpole Park, W5 5EQ

South Acton Children's Centre: Castle Close, W3 8RX

St Barnabas Church: Pitzhanger Lane, Ealing, W5 1QG

St Mary the Virgin: Perivale Lane, Perivale UB6 8TL

St Thomas the Apostle Boston Road, Hanwell W7 2AD

Zero Carbon Loft: 38a Cumberland Road, Hanwell W7 2EB

(See Open House booklet for full information on opening times and walking tours)

ECS Award Scheme

Help promote good design in the borough

Entries for our award scheme are needed by 30th September for attractive and sustainable building or landscape schemes completed in the last two years that have been in use for six months. The consent of the owner is required and entry forms can be obtained from the ECS website or by telephoning the Secretary on 020 8997 8824. Completed forms should be sent to 72 The Knoll W13 8HY including any photos and plans to assist the committee in selecting entries to be visited by the judges.

This year the committee will select the best from each of three categories: *Landscaping*, *Renovation of a building or structure* and a *New Building* for the judges to visit. The judges assess entries against four criteria: design; fitness for purpose; flexibility to meet changing needs; and other factors such as energy efficiency and re-use of materials.

Last year we had an encouraging number of entries and the overall winner chosen by the judges was John Perryn School in Acton.

This year's award evening will take place at 7.30 pm on Tuesday 22nd November in the Liz Cantell Room with guest speaker Torin Douglas, the BBC's media correspondent. He joined the BBC as media correspondent in 1989. He has interviewed four BBC director generals, five BBC chairmen and a dozen Cabinet ministers responsible for broadcasting and press issues.



There is still time to nominate entries for consideration by the judges, so let us know about any impressive developments, buildings or landscaping in your local area.

Judy Harris

Walpole Park Heritage Walks

Many of you will be aware of the good news that Walpole Park was recently awarded £2.4 million by the Heritage Lottery Fund to enable amenity and landscaping improvements to the park. Walpole Friends are now conducting heritage walks in the park. Over the London Open House weekend (see panel left) there will be walks on Saturday 17th September led by Irving Jones and on Sunday 18th September led by myself. Both start at 11 a.m outside the front of Pitzhanger Manor.

If you prefer to venture further afield on Open House weekend, I will be leading a further walk specifically for ECS members. This will be at 11 a.m on Tuesday 18th October. Once again meet outside the front of PM. Please come along and support these local initiatives.

Paul Fitzmaurice

Northala Fields Celebration

We celebrated Civic Day with a talk and guided walk at Northala Fields. This is a public open space with spectacular landscape mounds south of the A40 near the Target roundabout.



It is a new park created on designated green belt on which the former owners Kensington and Chelsea wanted to build houses. Ealing Council defended the greenbelt status vigorously, saving the land as open space and eventually purchasing it. Development plan proposals identified this together with land from Northolt Church to Rectory Park as the Northolt and Greenford Countryside Park but the field itself was unused for some years.

The event was organised jointly with the London Branch of the Landscape Institute so there was an interesting mix of Ealing people and landscape architects, with Jan Anderson, a Landscape Architect for Ealing Council, liaising with both groups. The talk was divided between the building of the Visitor Centre and the construction of the park. The architect of the centre was unable to come at the last minute but sent a presentation and script delivered by Jan. The building has two rooms, a classroom for hire and an attractive cafe with a lovely view of the fishing lake. The toilets are accessed separately. The building has a green roof and vandal-detering building materials. Gabions made of metal boxes filled with stones from waste concrete create a rather fortified appearance but provide an unsatisfactory surface for graffiti. The upper parts of the walls appear to be wood but are 'concrete composite' cladding that is fully recyclable, vandal-resistant and fire proof.

Rob Cairns who worked for Ealing Council during the design stage of the park talked about its design and then led the walk which was very pleasant when the sun came out. The mounds were created to reduce noise from the A40 and provide a landmark which paid for itself and the Visitor Centre. Material dug from London building sites was brought under contracts to the site, screened and used to construct the mounds. The money received for accommodating the waste material amounted to about £6 million, £5 million of which was used for the car parks and paths, the four mounds, fishing lakes, borehole and planting. Originally the intention was to have a lake with an island for wildfowl but Air Traffic objections were made that the birds would endanger flight paths. The deposits from the fishing lakes were used to cover the mounds. Care was taken over separating different layers so that each mound had its own soil characteristics and suitable seed mix. With the passage of time differences are now less obvious. The fishing is organised from the Visitors Centre by 'Get Hooked on Fishing', a charity set up to work with local communities and the police to help young people of all abilities from de-

prived areas to develop a range of skills through fishing and related activities. Fishing can be enjoyed at a reasonable cost and the fishing points are designed for wheelchairs. The walk ended by climbing the highest mound which gave a spectacular view of West London Northolt people have played an important part in the design and construction process and public opinion saved the diversion of money from building a Visitor Centre to development of other parks. This has led to an interesting and attractive park.

Judy Harris

Gunnersbury Update

Work continues on preparing bids for funding for Gunnersbury Park and Museum. Ealing and Hounslow Councils are currently talking with the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) about applying for a Heritage Grant (under £5 million) and a Parks for People bid. The deadlines for the bids are likely to be late 2011 or early 2012.

Experience gained from the recent successful bid for funding for Walpole Park is proving particularly useful. Florence Andrews, the Outreach Officer for Walpole Park and Gunnersbury, is employed by Ealing Council to run a number of surveys and consultation events to ensure that local people are involved in the future of the park and museum.

Taster events and workshops are also being organised to assess demand for various activities based around the museum. Consultants have been engaged to ensure that this work fits within the requirements of the HLF. Look out for opportunities to feed in your views and to get involved. Join the Friends of Gunnersbury:

<http://www.gunnersburyfriends.org> and email gunnersbury@ealing.gov.uk on progress of the bids.

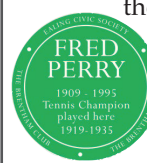
Philippa Dolphin

Plaques

We were fortunate to have dry but windy weather during the afternoon of 16th June when our green plaque to Fred Perry, Britain's greatest tennis player, was unveiled on the tower wall of the Brentham Club overlooking Meadvale Road W5 by Roger Draper CEO of the Lawn

Tennis Association – to the left of Ealing's Mayor John Gallagher in the picture below. The unveiling was part of an open day to celebrate the centenary of the club and many club members participated in tennis matches dressed in Edwardian tennis clothes. The plaque was co-promoted by Ealing Civic Society, the Brentham Club and the Brentham Society. English Heritage have agreed to erect a Blue Plaque to Fred Perry at his former home at 223 Pitshanger Lane W5 in a year or two.

Mike Tiley



Planning Issues

The five members of the Ealing Civic Society Environment Committee held our July meeting in the cramped conditions of Room 57 at Perceval House. We are helped by Planning Services who provide files on the larger applications. For smaller proposals we are reliant on the computer screens which are more difficult to view than the paper files that used to be available. We were surprised that there is no provision for viewing applications for cross-borough boundary consultations in Perceval House.

Reynard Mills site

We objected to a scheme for 315 residential units on the Reynard Mills 2.4 hectare site in Windmill Rd. W5, just over the borough boundary in Hounslow. This large housing scheme which is proposed on a site in a suburban area with limited access to public transport would provide a poor environment for proposed residents. The impact on the social infrastructure in Ealing would be unacceptable and, because on-site car parking is limited, parking would be likely to overflow onto neighbouring streets. Happily this application has been withdrawn by the developers.

Portal Way

More high rise student development is proposed at Portal Way off the A40 at Gypsy Corner, located on the south side of a cluster of very high buildings lacking open space. The pollution and noise from traffic provides a very poor residential environment and the blocks, both existing and proposed, would make an unpleasant climate of shade and draughts. We support local people who are concerned about students being encouraged to cycle yet not given adequate cycleways, and that the A40 green corridor should be provided with cycleways.

St Albans Church; Plough site, Northolt

We have expressed concerns about possible car parking and tree root damage at St Albans Church conversion, South Parade, Acton and the revised design of a new residential health facility on the site of the Plough public house in Northolt which was destroyed by fire. We have been pressing for a more domestic appearance.

Dickens Yard colonnades

St George have applied to vary the floorspace of the Dickens Yard building now under construction in Longfield Ave, Ealing. They want to fill in the colonnades along the frontage and at the rear to provide more floorspace for a foodstore. We objected to this because the public space in this scheme is already too limited. We considered it unacceptable to lose any space, especially the colonnades which would have provided a more human scale to offset the dominating high rise flats, but unfortunately our view was not shared by the planning committee.

Judy Harris

Ealing Civic Society Annual Lecture

On Tuesday 31st May, 2011 the invited speaker was **Sir Donald Insall CBE**, who spoke about "Living Buildings and Architectural Conservation." Sir Donald used two projection screens and a retro Kodak carousel (younger members might not know this method of displaying photographic images on a screen) to take us through the broader issues of building conservation, before moving on to a more detailed examination of projects he has been involved in in his lengthy career. These included rationalisation and reorganisation of the Bodleian Library, Oxford; maintenance and repair of Kedleston Hall, Derbyshire; the House of Lords

Chamber ceiling: *The ceiling was methodically recorded and carefully dismantled. Defective joinery was renewed, carvings consolidated, painted panels restored and the whole re-assembled, redecorated and selectively regilded.*



Work was programmed to take place only in the mornings, to allow uninterrupted afternoon sittings of the Lords below. And many more absorbing projects. I would have liked to hear more.

Tony Williams

Subscriptions

If you pay your subscription by standing order now is the time to alter it for 2012 to take account of the increase agreed at the AGM in April. Please see the enclosure with this Newsletter for how to do this.

If you pay by cash or cheque, and you have not yet paid it in 2011, please do so as soon as possible to avoid the need for an individual reminder to be sent. The amount for 2011 remains at £8. Your cheque payable to Ealing Civic Society should be sent to: Robin Roads, Hon Treasurer, Ealing Civic Society, 2 North Lodge, Ealing Green, London, W5 5QU.

2011/12 Executive Committee

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Tony Miller, Philippa Dolphin (Web Manager)

Jen Henley (Minutes Secretary)

Tony Williams (Newsletter Editor)

This edition of the ECS Newsletter was edited by Tony Williams. Contributors were Robert Gurd, Judy Harris, Paul Fitzmaurice, Mike Tiley, Philippa Dolphin, Tony Miller, Jen Henley, Margaret Gold and Tony Williams. Photograph of Plaque group Tom Doran; Lords Chamber Sir Donald Insall; station pictures London Transport.