



# 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](http://www.ealingcivicsociety.org)

Member of

**CIVIC  
VOICE**

## Spring 2013

### Chairman's Welcome

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2013. The issues that have been preoccupying us recently include neighbourhood planning and the future of the Arcadia and cinema sites. There is a separate article on neighbourhood planning (part of the Government's localism agenda) elsewhere in this issue but potentially the neighbourhood forums planned for central Ealing, West Ealing and Hanwell could bring about major change to these town centres in terms of the extent to which they take into account the aspirations of traders and residents. Unfortunately, Government guidance on how to set up and run these forums is still evolving so we are learning as we go along. There is potentially an enormous amount of work involved in drawing up a neighbourhood plan which could ultimately fall at the last hurdle: a referendum of businesses and residents affected by the proposals. Although there is a small number of approved neighbourhood plans in the country it remains to be seen how successful they will be in the long-term.

### Arcadia site

As reported in our last newsletter, Benson Elliot Asset Management were successful in their bid for the Arcadia site which was sold by the Irish Banks following the liquidation of Glenkerrin in the wake of the Irish banking crisis. Benson Elliot acquired the site in December and have since been seeking views from a number of local stakeholders, including ourselves, on how it should be developed in future. At the time of writing, their intentions remain unclear other than the fact that they are likely to en-

hance the existing Arcadia shopping centre by removing the central atrium area and turning the units "inside out" so they face the street rather than internally. Also, it is reported that TK Maxx are likely to expand their operation to extend across much of the first floor. As for the rest of the site, to the east of the Arcadia centre, it seems as if Benson Elliot intend to redevelop this incrementally rather than go for a "big bang" redevelopment. However, we expect more details to be available soon as a prelude to wider public consultation.

### Cinema Site

The Council has signed up their preferred partner (Land Securities) with a view to turning the cinema site, expanded to include the ex-YMCA building and Walpole house and Flavas Bar, into a new "cultural quarter" based around a new cinema building. Council sugges-

tions for redevelopment of the site included a possible central square, new access through the YMCA site and a possible new north-south route. We were concerned about some elements of the proposals, including a suggestion that the new cinema building could be separated from the retained facade of the former Empire cinema and that significantly taller elements (of unspecified height) could be located to the south of the site which could potentially

dominate the setting of Pitzhanger Manor. At the time of writing, Land Securities' intentions are unknown, but it is believed that they intend to form a partnership with one of the cinema chains to deliver the new cinema. As for Empire, they still insist that they propose to complete their redevelopment on the site they own and work restarted on the site at the end of 2012. They

### Ealing Civic Society Events 2013

#### Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 30th April, 7.30 pm

Liz Cantell Room, Ealing Town Hall

Guest Speaker: **John Goldsmith: Plans for Crossrail and Ealing**

#### Annual Public Lecture

Tuesday 25th June 7.30pm, Liz Cantell Room, Ealing Town

Hall, Speaker: **Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles**, local resident, former diplomat and Chairman of the Pitzhanger Manor Trust

#### ECS Annual Awards Ceremony

November (date to be confirmed) Ealing Town Hall

#### Coming events

**Civic Day 22nd June.**

**Open House London 21/22nd September**

told us that they would start with piling prior to erection of steelwork early in 2013 and appropriate plant has been seen at work on the site. The Council have indicated that they do not believe that Empire seriously intend to complete the development and are equally determined to proceed with their plans for compulsory purchase in partnership with Land Securities. So it remains to be seen who will blink first...

### **Pitzhanger Manor**

The Pitzhanger Manor Advisory Panel which gave advice to the Council on future restoration of the Manor and Art Gallery (on which I sat in a personal capacity) has been disbanded and replaced by a Trust charge to oversee the restoration. The Trust is headed by Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles, a former diplomat, who has recently moved to Ealing. The trust will be closely involved in the second stage of the bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for significant funding for the restoration of the buildings (expected to be submitted later this year). If the bid is successful and the restoration plans proceed, the buildings will be handed over to the Trust which will be responsible for their day-to-day management. We await the Council's detailed proposals for the restoration project which are likely to be controversial since they could involve part demolition of the existing buildings to remove the various accretions that have occurred over the centuries. The extent of the demolition is likely to be determined by the budget. Previous more ambitious plans which would have involved replacement of the gallery with a new state-of-the-art building have thankfully been replaced by more modest proposals involving refurbishment and adaptation of the existing building. The Council is expected to undertake consultation in the late summer or early autumn.

### **Acton Baths**

The old Acton Baths and the Kings Rooms (except the retained facade) were demolished towards the end of 2012 and piling has commenced for erection of the new leisure centre. We have been talking to the Council about making improvements to the plans, so far with limited success, but we continue to hope that they will take some of our ideas on board. We understand that Acton Town Hall, apart from the assembly Hall which is being converted to a library, is to be converted to residential housing by One Housing Group (a social housing organisation) which proposes to build 68 one- and two-bedroom flats on the site.

### **The Oaks Shopping Centre Acton**

We reported in previous newsletter the wholly unsuitable revised proposals put forward by the developer for this site and pleased to report that these were withdrawn last autumn. Further revised plans are expected to be released for consultation this spring.

### **2013 Annual General Meeting**

I look forward to seeing you at the AGM on Tuesday 30 April at which we will hear John Goldsmith, Area Communications Manager of Crossrail Ltd, who will tell us about the latest plans for the stations in the Borough, in particular those eagerly awaited at Ealing Broadway, West Ealing and Southall.

*Robert Gurd*

### **Ealing Civic Society Annual Awards 2012**

Our 2012 awards were presented by Tony Palmer, the television and film director and author, at the Town Hall on 27 November. The short-listed entries were judged by local architects Franklyn Nevard and Tom Jestic and landscape architect Mark Szutenberg. They assessed the nine shortlisted schemes against four criteria:

- \* design
- \* fitness for purpose
- \* contribution to the landscape
- \* other factors (energy efficiency, pedestrian access, anti pollution measures and re-use of materials)

Tom Jestic talked about the nine shortlisted buildings and landscapes before the three winners were announced.

The Award went to **Bluebell House**, 38a Waldemar Avenue, designed by Burd Haward Architects



(photo by Polly Tootal).

The refurbishment of **Greenford Hall**, Ruislip Road UB6 9QN by the London Borough of Ealing Business Service Group was highly commended.

**Southall Manor House Grounds** restoration by Ealing Council Major Projects Team and Groundwork London was commended. Southall Manor is located in The Green, Southall UB2 4BJ.

The other properties shortlisted for awards were: **Connelly Dell, Hanwell; Bramley Gardens and the Log Cabin, Northfield Avenue, W13; Westside Youth Centre, W13; The Penthouse, Carlton Road, W13 and 46c Woodhurst Rd W3.**

Following the presentation of the Awards, Tony Palmer talked about the importance of Ealing's artistic inheritance. He said that the arts, particularly music and film, had been and still were a major feature of Ealing life. The provision of good arts venues should be an essential part of the regeneration of the Borough.

### Libraries Local History Talks

With this newsletter is the flier for the 2013 Libraries Local History talks. Committee members Paul Fitzmaurice and your chairman will both be giving talks in this programme. On the 14 March and 18 April Paul will present a two part talk on 'Ealing Green through the ages'. In the first talk he will describe the old village round St Mary's and in the second talk move further up the Green to discuss the impact of the studios and the big houses that lined the Green. Later in the year on 12 September Robert will be talking on 'Ealing's architectural gems' and will describe the history of the design of various listed buildings including underground stations, Ealing Studios and some houses in Bedford Park. These talks tend to book up quite quickly so you are advised to book early.

### Reading this and not a member?

Why not join us?  
Phone **020 8567 4682**  
or see our website  
**[www.ealingcivicsociety.org](http://www.ealingcivicsociety.org)**

## Iron Duke

The Iron Duke sculpture was unveiled on Hanger Lane, W5 in early October. This is a piece of public art sponsored by TfL, with a financial contribution from Ealing Common Ward forum, as part of the Hanger Lane Bridges replacement project. The sculpture was the winning entry for a competition launched by Ealing Arts + Leisure and was created by South London artist Michael Sinclair and fabricated by Julian Raffae, a specialist blacksmith from Sussex.



The Iron Duke was one of the first broad gauge locomotives employed on Brunel's Great Western Railway and would have regularly passed on the mainline underneath the bridges. The project was managed by John Hummerston, chairman of the arts group on behalf of Ealing Civic Society and two residents' associations.

## Local Gems

*Mapping for Change* at University College London have created an interactive community map for us showing locally and nationally listed buildings and monuments in our Borough. They have added buildings which we and our members would like to see listed in order to prevent their demolition. We have branded these 'local gems'. The new website was formally launched at our Awards presentation ceremony on 27 November. You can get to the site by going to our website. Please let us know if you find any errors in locations or descriptions of the buildings and other features included.

*Philippa Dolphin*



## Central Ealing Neighbourhood Forum

### Neighbourhood planning

Neighbourhood Planning is now a reality for the centre of Ealing. By the time this Newsletter reaches ECS members the two Forums which were granted "front runner" status by the government last year should have been recognised by the Council. This means that local people can get directly involved in shaping the future of our town centres. The forums cover Central Ealing and West Ealing Centre, which were designated last year as "neighbourhood areas" under the 2011 Localism Act. Formal recognition gives the forums the right to create Neighbourhood Plans for their areas, which could have as great an impact on Ealing as any other development in its history. Information about neighbourhood planning can be seen on the SEC web site at **[www.saveealingscentre.com](http://www.saveealingscentre.com)**. A key factor now is that, to succeed, both must engage the local population in planning how our two centres should develop. SEC is appealing to everyone interested in the future of the town centre to get involved and to contribute ideas, however large or small, to the creation of the plan. Register on the CENF mailing list at **<http://eepurl.com/p8405>** for information on the central Ealing forum, or **[www.wecnf.wordpress.com](http://www.wecnf.wordpress.com)** for West Ealing.

*Tony Miller*

## Plaques Update

The next ECS Green Plaque for John Compton, who built organs for cinemas, churches and even a few cathedrals, is due to be unveiled at his former home at



37 Audley Road W5 (on the Haymills Estate) on Monday 20th May, followed by talks on John Compton, a short recital on the Compton Organ and refreshments at the nearby Church of the Ascension, Beaufort Road W5. His most famous cinema organ (and probably the best known operational one still in its original setting in the country) is at the Odeon Leicester Square where it rises onto the stage, with its multi-coloured illuminated console, for film premieres and special recitals.

*Mike Tiley*

## Ealing Broadway Centre sale

Ealing Broadway Centre was sold to British Land in February 2013 for a reported £142.5m as part of a wider portfolio of properties owned by the Dutch company Wereldhave which has disposed of all its UK property interests. The centre, which has over 60 retail units, has 300,000 sq ft of retail and leisure space, 800 car parking spaces and an office building. It has an annual footfall of around 15 million.

Charles Maudsley, British Land's head of retail, said: "Ealing Broadway is a highly attractive retail destination which meets the needs of today's consumers for convenient, well-located shopping. We believe there are significant opportunities to grow and develop the shopping centre as a retail destination both as we further improve the retail mix and increase the leisure offer and as the area benefits from residential development and the completion of Crossrail."

## Do we have your email address?

To receive regular communications from ECS on matters of interest and news updates please ensure we have your email address. Just click on the box on our website or email [info@ealingcivicsociety.org](mailto:info@ealingcivicsociety.org) with your name and preferred email address to ensure you get the full benefit of your membership.

## Street furniture

Most of us do not give street furniture (signs, cabinets, junction boxes etc) much thought unless they are damaged or in very poor condition. Usually, if there is a problem, notification to the Council will lead to some sort of action being taken even though this could take some time if maintenance of the item in question is the responsibility of another body. However, when your chairman reported some years ago the very poor state of the sewer vent pipes (these are tall freestanding pipes usually set in the pavement) he was told that these are not the responsibility of the Council. A long-standing ECS member, John Templeton, informed the chairman that they were once maintained by the Council when it had responsibility for mains sewerage but that changes in the organisation of the water industry over 20 years ago had led to this responsibility being passed to Thames Water. However, the latter denied any knowledge of their location and said that no proper inventory had ever been carried out. This is why they have not been maintained – they were last painted light blue some 30 years ago, as it happens at the behest of John Templeton! Once the location of individual vent pipes was brought to the attention of Thames Water they carried out maintenance on them, sometimes resulting in their removal but usually in their being painted a tasteful green and black. The results are shown in the pictures.

Your chairman has reported those pipes of which he is aware, but there are still many in the Borough that need to be repainted. If you see one which you think need some maintenance please report it to Thames Water via their helpline on 0845 9200 800 or their website. An exact location with postcode will speed up the process considerably.

*Robert Gurd*



Vent pipes, before and after (different locations)

## Application for Warren Farm Redevelopment Windmill Lane Southall

Ealing Civic Society object to the mass and height of buildings proposed for the redevelopment of the changing facilities on Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) at Warren Farm Playing Fields for Queens Park Rangers football team. QPR propose to make some facilities available to the community.

The massive facilities would be located on the highest point of the playing field. The area forms part of the Brent River Park where policy does not preclude ancillary leisure facilities, but the buildings and huge car parking areas would divide the open space as viewed from Windmill Lane. The impact would be contrary to the policy of maintaining openness of the MOL.

The London Plan provides that MOL should have similar protection to the Green Belt and that development should not have an impact on the openness of MOL. Inappropriate development should be refused except in very special circumstances.

The council has granted a very long lease to QPR who propose to build a large indoor gym 16m in height (equivalent of seven storeys), a sports academy 10m in height (four storeys), a media centre 13m in height (five storeys), pitches for QPR and 20 community pitches.

We requested that the proposal be withdrawn and a design agreed which reduces the impact of the built facilities including the following:

- 1) the height and size of the buildings should be significantly reduced
- 2) the tallest buildings should be set into the slope
- 3) the modelling of the land surfaces for pitches should be shown in section at this stage and designed to ensure the buildings are made less dominant
- 4) more space should be allocated for landscaping, designed to improve nature conservation value and reduce domination of car parks and buildings
- 5) public rights of way should be agreed at this stage as part of the landscape design.



## Smiths Farm Mound and Flats, Northolt

Although Ealing Civic Society welcomes the proposal to increase the area of public open space on this Green Belt land we are very concerned about the proposals to build four blocks of four-storey flats on the hard standing and buildings of Smiths Farm which is Green Belt. The area on which the mound is proposed is part of the defined site for nature conservation which includes reed bed, swamp, pond and woodland. The mound would destroy this and although the four existing mounds on Northala Fields have proved a popular feature they are of limited nature conservation value. If another mound is to be constructed it should not be located on the marshland habitat and its profile should be designed to enable woodland to be recreated.

The London Plan strongly supports the shielding of the Green Belt from inappropriate development and Ealing's Core Strategy requires the protection and enhancement of nature conservation sites. The area of buildings and hard standing are not part of the defined nature conservation site but we are concerned that the buildings could house bat roosts that have not yet been recorded. Adequate surveys should be made before the application is permitted.

The proposed blocks with their 64 flats and parking spaces would be an inappropriate and excessive development for a Green Belt site. It could be argued that the special circumstances of a large area of hard standing and buildings justify some enabling development to restore the nature conservation and public open space value of the site but we object strongly to the extent and height of the proposed residential development. Any residential development should be low-rise, relate to the local suburban character and provide an adequate increase in public open space with protection for any bat roosts.

## Planning Update

The Department of Communities and Local Government carried out a consultation on proposed changes to permitted development which ended on Christmas Eve. Ealing Civic Society objected to the proposed changes which would allow detached houses to be extended by 8m and other houses by 6m in non-protected areas. The proposals, if approved, would operate for three years to try to promote building projects and therefore increase employment.

Our concerns are that the changes would increase neighbour conflict; and schemes refused in recent years on grounds of overshadowing or overlooking would become permitted development. We hope that the Coalition will realise the problems that would be created and drop the proposal which has received a lot of criticism from amenity groups.

*Judy Harris*

The Society needs to think about new blood coming on to the Committee and especially people who can bring some fresh ideas and dynamism into our influential organisation. Most specifically we need to fill the position of Vice Chairman. The role involves deputising for the Chairman and learning the ropes of the Society with the aim of eventually taking over the Chairmanship. Robert Gurd and I would be very happy to discuss this with you, so please give it your closest attention.

*Corinne Templer, Vice President*

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 2013 AGM will be held in the Liz Cantell Room, Ealing Town Hall 7.30 pm, Tuesday 30th April 2013

### Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
  2. Chairman's Report for 2013
  3. Adoption of the Chairman's Report
  4. Treasurer's Report for 2013
  5. Adoption of the Treasurer's Report
  6. Subscriptions (see below)
  7. Appointment of Auditors
  8. Election of Officers:  
Currently:  
Chairman – **Robert Gurd**  
Vice-Chairman – **vacant**  
Secretary – **Judy Harris**  
Treasurer – **Robin Roads**
  9. Election of other committee members
- The following current committee members have

indicated a willingness to stand for a further year: **Corinne Templer (Vice President), Deirdre McClellan (Membership), Tony Miller, Mike Tiley, Paul Fitzmaurice, Maggie Gold, John Sears, Philippa Dolphin (Web manager), Jen Henley.** In accordance with the constitution, further nominations for election to the committee may be made by members of the Society. They must be submitted in writing to the Secretary (Judy Harris, 72 The Knoll, Ealing W13 8HY) at least 14 days before the Annual General Meeting, supported by a seconder who is also a member of the Society. The consent of the nominee must first have been obtained. If the nominations exceed the number of vacancies, a ballot shall take place.

10. Motions and any other business submitted to the Chairman in writing prior to the meeting.
11. Talk by **John Goldsmith**, Area Communications Manager of **Crossrail Ltd**, who will tell us about the latest plans for the stations in the Borough.

### 2012/13 Executive Committee

**Robert Gurd** (Chairman)  
60 Beaufort Rd W5 3EA (8998 4417)  
**Corinne Templer** (Hon. Vice President)  
**Judy Harris** (Secretary)  
72 The Knoll W13 8HY (8997 8824)  
**Robin Roads** (Treasurer)  
2 North Lodge, Ealing Green W5 5QU (8579 5910)  
**Deirdre McLellan** (Membership – new members)  
36 The Grove W5 5LH (8567 4682)  
**Michael Tiley**  
30 Devonshire Road, W5 4TP (8840 7447)  
**Paul Fitzmaurice**  
18 Elers Road, W13 9QD (8567 3024)  
**Margaret Gold**  
24 Lyncroft Gardens W13 9PU (8567 6158)  
**Tony Miller**  
6 Winscombe Crescent W5 1AZ (8930 5130)  
**John Sears**  
**Philippa Dolphin** (Web Manager)  
**Jen Henley** (Minutes Secretary)

**Tony Williams** (Newsletter Editor)

### Subscriptions

If you pay your subscription by cash or cheque, early payment will save you from receiving a reminder later in the year.

The amount due for the calendar year 2013 is £12.00. 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

Members who pay by standing order pay £2.00 less and are not worried by reminders. If you would like to change your method of payment please download a form from our website. Alternatively e-mail me:

Robin@robinroads.co.uk or Tel 8579 5910.

*Robin Roads*

The ECS Newsletter was edited by Tony Williams. Contributors were Paul Fitzmaurice, Robert Gurd, Judy Harris, Mike Tiley, Philippa Dolphin, Tony Miller, Robin Roads and Tony Williams.

Photos: Moira Black

Picture Warren Farm: Google Earth