



No. 45

CHELSEA SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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90 Not Out – *Looking Forward to our Century*

JAMES THOMPSON, CHAIRMAN

In our 90th Anniversary Year we aim to do two things: maintain our traditions and try out some new things. Our founders' passion for the preservation of Chelsea is still felt today: the best aspects of our past should be cherished, and any change should be an improvement.

It is testimony to the dedication of Society members over 90 years that we are a flourishing organisation, always adapting ourselves to new circumstances while still maintaining our traditions. For example, our Annual Report has been coming out since 1927, so we can be proud of this uninterrupted contact with our members since the Society was founded. Past copies are a treasure house of Chelsea history, and we are scanning them so that they can be available on our website: www.chelseasociety.org.uk

Our activities

This **Newsletter** is a more recent innovation, started in 1993, now, at issue 45, an established tradition. It is still printed and distributed by post, as is the **Annual Report**. Our **Lectures** have been well attended, and this year we have had talks on the Chelsea-based composer Peter Warlock, on Cecil Beaton's interior designs, the photography of luxury Chelsea interiors and, branching further afield, Anglo-German diplomatic relationships. We have also arranged public meetings on planning, and RBKC finances. We are attempting to increase the frequency and

range of topics of these lectures, such that there will always be one event a month.

We are trying new things. We will be offering our Annual Report to a wider public, starting with our advertisers and other Chelsea institutions, as a way of telling them about Chelsea and about the work of the Society, and gaining new members. "Annual Report" is probably not the most alluring of titles, which suggests it is just a financial statement. It might be more accurate to call it "The Chelsea Society Review", but I welcome other suggestions on its content and presentation.

We are working hard to establish a permanent **Chelsea Society Cricket team**, and welcome volunteers. The intention is to provide an entertaining game so that visitors to Chelsea can enjoy themselves, and learn more about the work of the Society.

Planning is done by a five-person Committee, with a representative for each of the four Chelsea wards of RBKC, and is chaired by Society Vice-Chairman Michael Stephen. It is sometimes assumed that we are against all planning applications, (untrue, if you look at our Planning notes) and that we never say what we would approve of. To turn that round, we have introduced an Architecture Prize, to be given to the best proposal for a new building on a site in Chelsea which needs to be improved. As good neighbours, we will liaise with owners of the



Credit: RBKC Libraries

Reginald Blunt – Our founder

CONTENTS

The King's Road	2
Planning Report	4
Advertising	8
Crossrail 2 Update	9
London Lorry Controls	10
The Changing River	11
Chelsea Pottery	12
Obituaries.....	14
Chelsea Society Summer Meeting..	15
Dates for your Diary.....	16

► sites concerned.

To make our **Events** easier to book, ticketing is now done by Cadogan Hall. You can book by phone on 020 7730 5400, or go and visit them in person. You can also book on the internet. Our next event is our Summer Party on Wednesday 5 July, which this year will also get you free entry earlier that afternoon to the Masterpiece exhibition.

We offered Members a chance to live like a Chelsea Artist, courtesy of The London Sketch Club. We will be doing this again, with more emphasis on tutors leading a beginner's class, and a guarantee that your efforts will not be shown to anyone if that is your wish.

We have looked at the costs of our activities in some detail, and found that printing and sending out the Annual Review, two Newsletters and flyers for

events, meetings and the AGM takes up much of the membership income. That is even after working hard to find advertisers for the Annual Report. Hence, we have had to raise subscriptions for next year by £5. The Lectures, Visits and Tours normally break even, or make a small contribution to our funds.

Our biennial **Exhibitions** cost £40,000 and require major support from sponsors, or otherwise they could not be contemplated. Given the immense effort involved, we will only do another Exhibition if we can produce a book or record of some sort which we can sell to defray the costs. Having sounded that warning, we are considering an Exhibition in 2018 on Chelsea Fashion. If you have exhibits we would be delighted to hear from you. The current plan is to have a Fashion Show together with Peter Jones to

display them.

We will continue to mail out the Annual Report, and two Newsletters a year to all members. In addition, we are also sending notice of events by email. Those without emails will continue to get paper flyers, even though that method is much more expensive.

The Chelsea Society depends on its Members. Volunteers are always welcome, and can determine how much time they wish to contribute. Suggesting events and helping with them are always helpful contributions.

I hope to see you at the Summer Party on 5th July. ■

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<https://www.facebook.com/savethequeensheadchelsea>

Twitter: @savethequeens16

Changing Character of the King's Road

MICHAEL BACH

What sort of place do we want it to be?

Recent issues of the Newsletter have focused on the changing character of Chelsea, especially that of the King's Road. People remember when many of the shops were independent and when the King's Road was famous as one of the centres for fashion in the 1960s and 1970s. Even 15 years ago, when we did a survey, our competitors were seen as Covent Garden. Who would they be now?

Today the King's Road, despite the "curation" - carefully choosing the mix of shops - by the Cadogan Estate, including the incursion of more luxury brands, many of the shops are part of national or even international chains. Nevertheless, the King's Road seems as busy as ever, but with a changing clientele. Only we recognise these changes, which we may regret but

more likely acknowledge that it is the way of the world. So, what are the issues today and what can we do about it?

Changing Streetscape

Twenty years ago the King's Road was a mess. The pavements were mixture of materials - mainly asphalt and concrete - and crossing the side roads was difficult as many drivers were unaware of pedestrians having priority. The Society proposed to the Council that there should be a single paving material - York stone - and that there should be a continuous pavement the length of the King's Road as a result of raised surfaces at nearly every junction. Work started in 1998.

What that scheme did not do was to get rid of guardrailling around crossings and, particularly, guardrailling on "islands" to "protect" pedestrians at major crossings. Indeed, it not only failed to reduce the



Bollards obstacle course, King's Road

Picture: Michael Bach



Credit: Paul Aitkenhead

clutter, but all existing impedimenta were kept and cemented in place and a regiment of bollards were installed to protect the Yorkstone pavements.

In terms of changing the streetscape for the better, the major steps forward were the Yorkstone paving and the "continuous pavement" across most of the side-road junctions. Although there was no attempt at decluttering - removal of unnecessary street furniture - we were saved from a procession of pedestrian crossings with traffic signals.

In 2010, the Council decided to revisit King's Road to remove the clutter, especially guardrailling and signage, reduce the number of traffic lights by incorporating them on lighting columns and to put in new lighting. There were mixed views on the bollards - some people were attached to these "traditional" impediments to parking on the pavement - even though there was never a tradition of bollards and these were modern "reproductions". However, the cost of taking them out was the deciding factor. The greatest concentration - the north side between Tryon Street and Bywater Street - there are 17 bollards. Apart from being a significant obstruction to pedestrians, they do nothing to contribute to the relaxed atmosphere of the King's Road.

Traffic

Contrary to popular belief, the King's Road does not carry much through traffic apart from buses, as most through traffic uses Cromwell Road and the Embankment. Nevertheless, in addition to buses, local traffic - residents, taxis and particularly deliveries - makes up the bulk of the traffic. The King's Road primarily serves to provide access for Chelsea residents

whether in a bus, in their cars or in taxis, as well as an increasing amount of home deliveries.

For much of the day there are probably just as many people walking up and down the King's Road as there are in vehicles. They need to be given space for walking along the road, time and space to cross the road or a place where people can just enjoy being there. There are not enough places to stop, rest and watch the world go by.

But have we got the balance right yet? King's Road, like many roads, have evolved to accommodate traffic and have given precedence, in terms of space and time, to moving vehicles. The raised "crossings" on the side-road junctions have made things more comfortable for pedestrians, and the removal of guardrailling has made King's Road more people friendly. Introducing signalled crossings - and especially any associated guardrailling - would be a backward step, although it would be ignored.

We need to have a discussion about King's Road as a place to be in rather than just as place to drive through or get out of. But it is a more general issue which needs to be applied to other parts of Chelsea,

Memorial at Corner of Sydney Street

whether Sloane Street, Sloane Square or the Chelsea Embankment.

Managing the future of the King's Road

There is a feeling that the King's Road is drifting and may have lost its way, although not as badly as Kensington High Street, Notting Hill Gate or even Knightsbridge. There is no vision for the King's Road - no group of people who could produce a strategy and secure improvements. Kensington and Chelsea is surrounded by boroughs which do seek to guide the future of their centres, whether through a town centre management group or business improvement district. And it shows as even the most basic cleansing and janitorial management is lacking, let alone marketing.

In 2007 the Council adopted the report of its Retail Commission, which included a proposal to manage the Borough's town centres - ten years later they are still drifting, buffeted by the winds of the market. Perhaps the new Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport, Councillor Tim Ahern will take up the recommendations in the report he commissioned back in 2007. ■

Planning Report

MICHAEL STEPHEN, CHAIRMAN OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Summary of Planning issues dealt with in detail on our website: www.Chelseasociety.org.uk

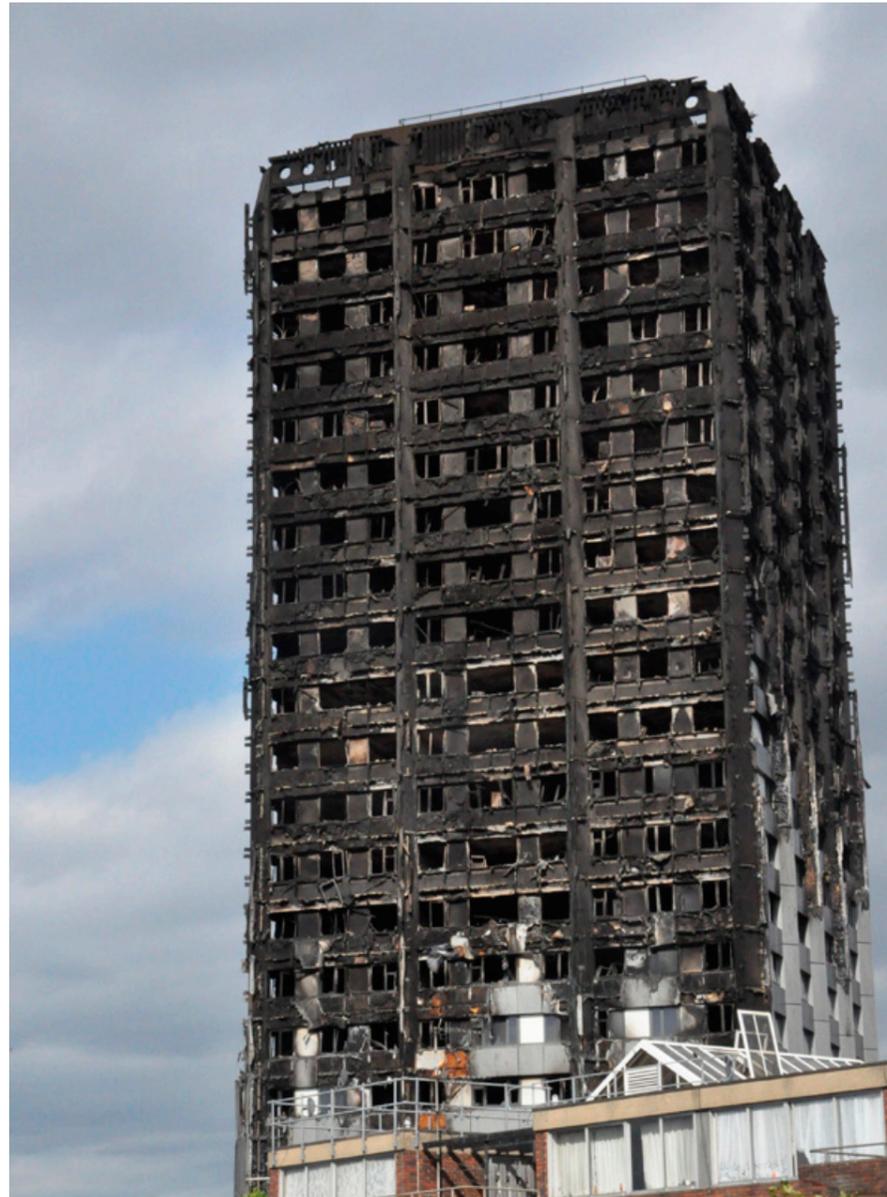
Grenfell Tower

The Chelsea Society is appalled by the devastation caused by the fire at Grenfell Tower, and sends its sincere condolences to the people affected and their families.

The Society welcomes the Government's commitment to a public inquiry chaired by a judge, and we will campaign for any changes which may be necessary for tower blocks having regard to those findings. The Society also expresses its support for those who are dealing with the aftermath of this dreadful tragedy in our Borough.

The Society also encourages its members to contribute to the relief funds which have been established, such as through the Big Give www.biggive.org.uk/grenfell where your donation will be matched and Gift Aid added.

The Government has appointed Sir Martin Moore-Bick as chairman of the public Inquiry, which will consider the cause of the fire, why it spread, and what might have been done to prevent it or mitigate its consequences. In our view the Inquiry should also consider the specification and testing of materials which are used in many tower blocks in many cities, and make recommendations for any amendment of the national building regulations and fire regulations which may be necessary. The Inquiry should also consider what lessons can be learned from the immediate response to the disaster by the fire service, the health service, and by the local authority and others, and whether further arrangements need to



Picture: Michael Bach

Grenfell Tower looming over North Kensington

be made by central government to give immediate help to local authorities who may be overwhelmed by a disaster of this magnitude.

The tragic fire led to the resignations of the Council's Chief Executive, Nicholas

Holgate, on 19 June, and on 30 June of the Leader of the Council, Councillor Paget-Brown, the Deputy Leader, Councillor Feilding-Mellen, and the Chief Executive of the Tenant Management Organisation, Robert Black. The Inquiry

may be expected to consider their role in the events leading up to the disaster, and their response to it.

On 3 July, the Conservative group of Councillors proposed Councillor Elizabeth Campbell, of Royal Hospital Ward, as the new Leader of the Council.

New member of the Planning Committee

Patrick Baty has retired as member of the Committee for Stanley Ward, and has been replaced by Laura Carrara-Cagni, who is an architect. We thank Patrick for his service, and welcome Laura as a member of the Committee.

Meet the Planners

On 10 April at a meeting attended by about 50 members, Mr. Graham Stallwood, Executive Director of Planning and Borough Development of RBKC, and Cllr. Tim Coleridge, Cabinet-member for Planning Policy and Arts, explained the roles of the professional planners and the elected Councillors in planning the Chelsea of the future.

RBKC Finances

On 22 May we held a discussion with Cllr. Warwick Lightfoot, Cabinet-member for Finance and Strategy at RBKC, who explained how the Council collects, spends, and invests our money.

The King's Road

In the 1960s the rather bohemian character of Chelsea attracted entrepreneurs and designers like Mary Quant to the King's Road, and it became – together with Carnaby Street in the West End, the focus of the pop-culture, attracting young people from all over the world. However, like all fashions, this one has passed into history, but the King's Road still has a reputation which attracts people from all over the world to its shops, pubs and coffee-bars, and generates income for local businesses.

The Chelsea Society has identified a number of issues which need to be addressed:

- A. The use of the road
- B. The appearance of the road
- C. Air quality

For details see the Planning & Environment section of our website under "Infrastructure" and "Policy"

Heathrow Airport

A case has been made by business interests for a third runway at Heathrow, but the Council of the Society has resolved to oppose this because its mandate is to protect the quality of life of the people of Chelsea, which would be adversely affected by many more flights over Chelsea, creating more noise and air pollution, and increasing the risk of a catastrophic accident over a very densely populated area. The Society consulted its members by e-mail on 16th May, and only one member communicated the contrary view. The Society has responded accordingly to the government consultation.

Credit: BT Link



BT Link Telephone Kiosk

Telephone Kiosks

The Society considers that in the age of the mobile phone there are far too many ugly telephone kiosks cluttering

the streets of Chelsea. They are not properly maintained, and are often used as hoardings for unacceptable advertising. The Planning Committee of the Society has therefore objected to many of the recent applications for additional kiosks.

The Society was pleased to see that RBKC had made Key Decision 05020/17/P/A to make application to the Secretary of State for a Regulation 7 Direction to remove deemed advertising consent for the display of advertisements on public call boxes outside conservation areas, with an implementation date of 24 April 2017.



Le Colombier

Le Colombier Restaurant, 145 Dovehouse Street

RBKC did not confirm the Article 4 direction, and the owner has made a renewed application (PP/17/03362) for change of use to include 3 x 2-bed flats. This application is very similar to the 2012 application which was refused by the Council's Planning Committee and, when appealed in 2013, was dismissed by the Inspector. The Chelsea Society has

Picture: Michael Bach

► objected to this new application on the ground that the restaurant is an important facility for the local community which could not continue to function during the proposed development works, nor if the space available for restaurant and/or kitchen use were to be reduced. In addition, the proposed works would constitute over-development of this property, and the works would cause massive disruption in this congested area, close to two important hospitals.

The Queen's Head Public House, Tryon Street

The Society supported an application to RBKC to designate the pub as an "Asset of Community Value" (which restricts the permitted development rights which the owner would otherwise have), and it was listed as ACV for 5 years on 10 November 2016.

Planning permission was granted on 27 February 2017 subject to a s.106 Agreement.

Cineworld Cinema 279 Kings Road

The cinema has now closed and planning permission has been given for the demolition of the existing building and the construction of a new mixed-use building including retail (Use Class A1), cinema (Use Class D2) and residential units (Use Class C3). A Construction Traffic Management Plan has been provided to RBKC. See <http://chelseasociety.org.uk/cineworld-cinema/>

The planning consultants have been requested to liaise with the owners of the Curzon cinema on the King's Road, which is also being redeveloped, to minimise the period that both cinemas are closed.

Royal Brompton Hospital

The Society's position on this issue is at <http://chelseasociety.org.uk/brompton-hospital-community-liaison-group/>



Credit: Auriens

Proposed luxury retirement housing on site of Thamesbrook, Dovehouse Street

The Society has also submitted detailed observations on the drawings and specifications.

Thamesbrook

The Planning Application (PP/17/00583) to redevelop this site was granted on 20th April 2017 by 8 votes to 5 to convert Thamesbrook into 55 luxury "retirement living apartments". The Society's position is at <http://chelseasociety.org.uk/thamesbrook/> The Council has sold this property to Auriens (www.auriens.com) - a company that specialises in luxury retirement housing - described as a "£200m "luxury lifestyle concept" scheme in Chelsea aimed at "high net worth perennials" looking for "later lux life".

Auriens plans to build a new, high-quality building in the heart of London's Chelsea, specifically designed to meet the needs of those in later life. The new development will also include fully integrated care and health facilities, a first-class restaurant, hydrotherapy pool, spa, gym, private members' club, café, gardens, library, consulting rooms and cinema. The scheme will commence this summer, with doors expected to open to residents at the end of 2019.

Sloane Street

The Society's position is at <http://chelseasociety.org.uk/sloane-street/>

On 11 May the Society's Chairman, the Chairman of the Planning Committee and the Planning Committee member for the Brompton and Hans Town Ward had a site-meeting at the north end of the street with representatives of the Cadogan Estate, Transport for London, RBKC officials, the

traffic consultants engaged by Cadogan, and Councillor Coleridge.

TfL confirmed that the priority at the Sloane Street/Knightsbridge intersection was the East-West flow along the A4.

They offered to look at alternative lay-outs for the junction, but were not optimistic that a better solution could be found. They assured us that the junction is under real-time surveillance, that traffic light timing changes can be made if warranted and that any vehicles obstructing the carriageway can be quickly identified and dealt with.

RBKC officials argued that the carriageway of Sloane Street could be narrowed without any deleterious effect on the flow of buses, but their analysis seemed to be a static one, i.e. without taking any account of the effect of parked, loading or waiting vehicles, of which there are many in Sloane Street throughout the day. They acknowledged that the parking bays which they want to install on both sides of the street might protrude somewhat into the carriageway.

Following the meeting the Chairman of the Planning Committee has written to Councillor Coleridge recording the points on which further information was promised and re-iterating the Society's view that the carriageway should not be made any narrower than it currently is between Basil Street and Harriet Street; and that any parking bays in this section should be confined to the western side.

The traffic consultants claimed that their studies showed that any alternative arrangement, such as making Basil Street one way westbound, would not

help and might even make things worse. They undertook to show us the studies on which they based this conclusion, but so far have not done so. TfL have been asked to monitor and report on the flow of traffic affected by the current temporary closure of Basil Street.

Cadogan Pier and Chelsea Reach

The issue of residential moorings and larger boats continues.

Christchurch Solar Panels

We assisted the church in amending their application to meet the concerns of the Planning Department (including a roof-top visit) and the revised application has now been approved.

1A Walton Street

Council officials have rejected the planning application for the construction of a large basement at 1A Walton Street, the old court house. This was a hugely controversial project which would have caused massive disruption and traffic dislocation and it generated a high number of objections, including from The Chelsea Society and the three Ward Councillors.

Lots Road Power Station

The contractors for the Chinese developers of the Chelsea side of the site are still working to stabilise the hulk of the Power Station itself (having long since removed the roof structure) so are nowhere near building the apartments which will trigger release of section 106 funds, although extension of the Thames Path is still promised on both sides of the site. Meanwhile the Fulham side of the site is being built up using Lots Road for all construction vehicles.

Thames Tideway Tunnel and Counters Creek Storm Relief Sewer

Tideway have completed preparatory works at Cremorne Wharf by levelling the site. A Public Consultation in advance of a formal planning application by Thames Water to create a Counters Creek Storm Relief Sewer (to take extra sewerage from Fulham, Hammersmith and Kensington) has been pending for many months.

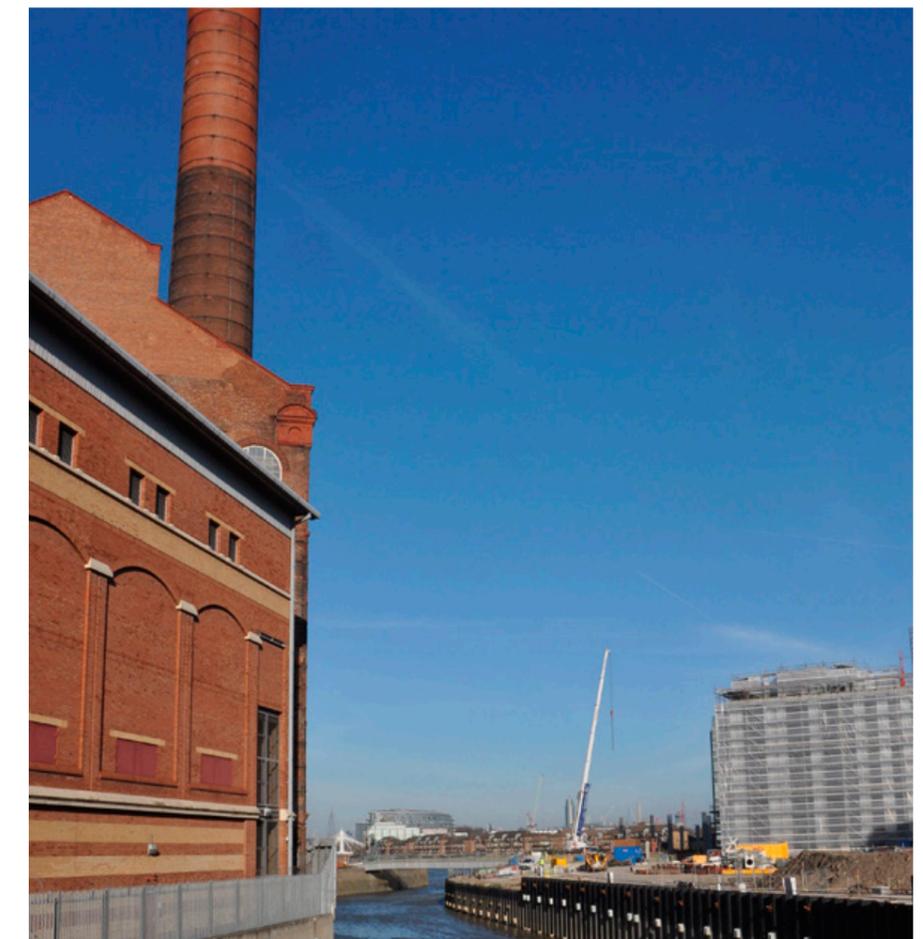
Streetscape Improvements/Protection for Pedestrians

Under the FOI procedure we have established that TfL will very belatedly conduct a public consultation exercise in 2017/18 in preparation for providing some protection for pedestrians using

the Thames Path at the busy junction between the northern end of Battersea Bridge and the Embankment. In addition TfL are also trying to improve pedestrian safety at the junctions of Chelsea Embankment/Oakley Street and Chelsea Embankment/Chelsea Bridge Road. Also for protecting pedestrians crossing the lower part of the Earls Court One-Way System.

Lots Road Area: Employment

The RBKC Property Services Team is still seeking to override the Local Plan and the protected status of employment land in the Lots Road Employment Zone by assuming that their newly-purchased commercial space in Lots Road North will largely be given over to housing rather than enhancing the creative industries cluster in the immediate area. ■



Lots Road Power Station

Advertisements on the King's Road: a sorry saga

MICHAEL BACH

The King's Road is suffering an onslaught of advertisement panels.

First it was "advertphones" – JCDecaux advertisement panels with a BT telephone on the back in 2012. More recently came the JCDecaux digital advertisement panels tucked under the end of bus shelters – some owned by Transport for London and others by the Royal Borough. Even more recently there have been proposals for another crop telephone kiosks with large advert panels on the back by Maximum Networks. Fortunately, these were all refused by the Council. Now there is another one from New World Payphones, with Clearchannel to replace existing kiosks with new ones with a large advertisement panel on the back. New World Payphones withdrew their applications on 22 June. They may be back and there are others waiting to enter the market.

We may have passed "peak phone" – that market is saturated and many people have mobile phones, but have we yet reached "peak adverts"?

How did this happen?

In the early 1980s the Government sought to encourage competition to BT's monopoly of public telephone kiosks, by enabling any telephone company to put telephone kiosks in the pavement without planning consent and, as long as the footprint of the kiosk was no more than 1.5sqm (about the size of a BT kiosk), no planning consent would be required for the kiosk. The Council had little or no control, except if they were poorly sited or harmed amenity. This resulted in a surge of telephone kiosks – so many that the Council called a halt to further kiosks in the King's Road.

In 1980 both London Transport and the Royal Borough entered separate contracts with Clear Channel Adshel for all the bus shelters in the King's Road. These shelters had limited advertising, at most two panels inside the shelters with paper posters. Around 2000, there was a move to change these adverts to back-lit, scrolling adverts.

Since 2000, it has been clear that we have far too many telephone kiosks, especially as more and more people had mobile phones. In 2007 BT/JCDecaux first came up with advertphones, but the Council refused 11 applications. All were appealed and dismissed. Six of these were for the King's Road.

In 2012, BT and JCDecaux approached the Council offering to remove some of their existing phones in exchange for being allowed to put in advertphones. Unfortunately, someone forgot that these



Picture: Michael Bach

Digital screens on bus shelters

phones had already been rejected. BT/JCDecaux chose about 60 sites in the Borough, which led to 41 applications. The planning officers proposed allowing 25 and refusing 16, but the Planning Committee refused them all. The developers appealed 25 cases, and succeeded on 20 of these. This resulted in seven of these advertphones from Sloane Square and World's End.

Invasion of digital advertising screens

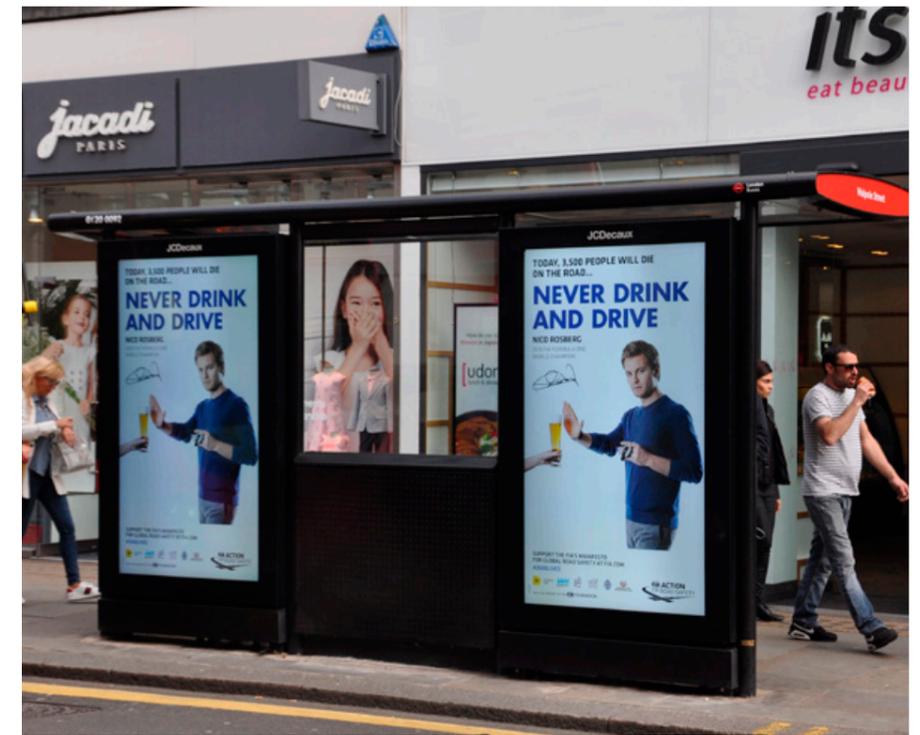
In 2015 Transport for London entered into the biggest bus shelter advertisement contract in the world with JCDecaux – worth £300m – to put large, digital advertising screens as a bookend to their bus shelters. At much the same time the Council changed their contract for their 80 bus shelters from Clear

channel/Adshel to JCDecaux. The new contract also includes digital advertising screens.

You will have noticed these screens – they went in last October, but unfortunately Clear Channel, who lost the contract, took away their shelters. Although JCDecaux were ready to put in their new screens, none of the new bus shelters were ready – as a result we had to do without both shelters and the seats, but we do have the free-standing screens! The Council's contract with JCDecaux includes new shelters and free maintenance and the Council will receive £962,000 a year plus an undisclosed share of the profits. Ten of these shelters with digital advertisements are in the King's Road and a further 10 elsewhere in Chelsea.

Council needs to be able to take control

The cumulative effect of the telephone kiosks with digital advertisements and the digital advertisement screens on bus shelters has changed the look of the King's Road in the last 5 years and there could be more to come.



Digital screens on bus shelters

Whilst the bus shelters are a done deal, we need to get the Council and our MP to tackle the Government about the invasion of adverts through telephone companies who are not really interested in providing more

telephones, merely selling more advertising space. The Government needs to give the Council new powers to control both additional telephone kiosks and the spread of digital advertising panels. ■

Crossrail 2: Update

MICHAEL BACH

Crossrail 2 was not included in the Government's Election manifesto which gave rise to speculation about the future of the project. No announcement has been made by the Government about their assessment of the viability of the project as concerns had been expressed about the overall cost of the project and how it would be financed. Considerable pressure has been put on the Government by the Mayor, London First, London Chamber of Commerce and others, to open up areas for London's growth, such as the Upper Lea Valley, to increase

densities in Kingston and Wimbledon and to reduce overcrowding on radial services to Central London, and especially at major London stations. The Mayor aims to open Crossrail 2 by 2033.

The Mayor's Draft Transport Strategy was launched on 21 June and is open to consultation until 2 October. Crossrail 2 is one of the key projects (Consultation Question 3) and a whole section is devoted to it "Focus on Crossrail 2" (pages 73-75 and Proposal 56), still showing King's Road Chelsea as a station, although the footnotes say "subject to change".

Unconfirmed rumours suggest that a plan with no station on King's Road was used to test the "with station" option.

On 26 June the Mayor launched a consultation on raising a significant proportion of the funding through a new Mayor Community Infrastructure Levy on proposals for new offices, shops and hotel developments from April 2019.

It would appear that the snap election has set back the timetable of the project by a year, which could add a further £2 billion to the £31 billion project. ■

Picture: Michael Bach



Advert phone

London Lorry Control Scheme Review

MICHAEL BACH

Before the 1981 Greater London Council elections, traffic campaigners led locally by West London Traffic Reform, Chelsea Society and Cheyne Walk Trust, secured a commitment from the Labour Party to introduce a “night and weekend lorry ban”, not just for the Earl’s Court One-Way System and the Chelsea Embankment, but for the whole of London.

The proposed controls were the subject of a full public inquiry which concluded in 1985, shortly before the GLC was abolished by the Government, and led to the introduction of controls on heavy goods vehicles driving through or making deliveries within London. The aim was to minimise noise pollution in residential areas during unsocial hours through restricting heavy lorries to designated routes.

This scheme has been run for the last 30 years by the grouping of London Boroughs – now known as London Councils. Last year, they decided to review the scheme, its purpose and the impact it has on the delivery of goods and services in London. It was to assess the effectiveness of the scheme, including its impact on the freight industry, business and the benefits to London residents. I was invited to represent London residents affected by the scheme.

The key findings of the review so far are:

- there is a lack of awareness and understanding of the scheme, which is often thought to be a “ban”;
- there are technologies that could improve the operation of the scheme and that noise standards should be developed to transform the way the scheme operates. Improved compliance could be secured through CCTV and number plate recognition; and
- the freight industry wants to reassess the controls on routes, weight limits



and hours of control to reflect advances in vehicle design and the changing needs of London’s economy.

Unfortunately, the review to date has been one-sided – primarily reflecting the views of the freight industry – although it is recognised that wider, targeted public engagement is needed, using “borough contacts and networks to help progress and develop the recommendations”.

Chelsea – especially the One-Way System and Cheyne Walk and Chelsea

Embankment – would be directly affected by any changes. The Cheyne Walk Trust has been critical of the current levels of enforcement and the continuing noise and vibration experienced at nights and weekends. Tougher standards and better enforcement head their list of demands. The Council now needs to engage with local residents to help improve the design and working of the London Lorry Control Scheme to secure reduced impact of heavy lorries at night and at weekends within the Royal Borough. ■



Foreshore walk; September 2016

Picture: Michael Bach

The Changing River

MICHAEL BACH



View of Chelsea

Picture: Michael Bach

Only when we see old photographs or Hugh Krall’s paintings and drawings of the changing river at Chelsea from the early 1990s can we appreciate how much views have changed.

There is a big difference, however, between the view of Chelsea and the view from Chelsea. The view of Chelsea has of course changed greatly from Canaletto view which was dominated by the Royal Hospital, and the later paintings of a busy waterfront, boatyards and several riverside pubs, most of which was swept aside by the Bazalgette’s Embankment in 1873.

But the panorama of Chelsea seen from Battersea looks, like a well-preserved 18th century townscape with the Chelsea Old Church as its focus, interspersed with late-19th and early 20th century mansion blocks. Its industrial buildings, like Chelsea Flour Mills and, of course, Lots Road Power Station are in the process of being “regenerated”, but the view will be dominated by the new towers either side of Chelsea Creek. Only Cremorne Wharf remains unaltered. The World’s End/ Cremorne Estate is the main 20th century contribution.

The view of Chelsea deserves greater recognition – it is a unique panorama – one of the few relatively unspoilt townscapes or urban riverscapes. It does not have the grandeur of the Central London Thames nor the semi-rural nature of riverscapes further west. This deserves greater recognition in the protection it should get from the planning system – both by the Mayor and by the Council. It needs protection from the “background” buildings – the Holiday Inn on Cromwell Road dominates the view north from Battersea Bridge – but also needs more protection from what is done on the other side of the river.

But it is the view from Chelsea that also needs to be tackled. Almost all the industrial heritage of Battersea has disappeared, to be replaced by offices and modern blocks of flats, larger in scale and of a different character to the Chelsea Riverside. The Royal Borough seems to take little interest in the Chelsea Riverside on the basis that is completely covered by conservation areas, the most recent being that for the Lots Road area. The future of Cremorne Wharf and its potential redevelopment are a matter for concern.

Riverside Housing: The branding of riverside housing developments, or any new development, is a specialised business – the main problem is recognising the brand.

We now have Chelsea Island, “London’s latest high-end waterside development” by the www.hadleypropertygroup.com/properties/chelsea-island is on a peninsula on the east side of Chelsea Creek. It is a boutique development of “just 89 private apartments and penthouses”. It is designed to be exclusive, unconnected with anything else, but nevertheless borrowing the “Chelsea” tag to provide some authenticity for what is an essentially placeless development. Prices range from £935,000 for a 1-bedroom flat, from £1,450,000 for 2-bedrooms, from £2,300,000 for 3 bedrooms

Water Gardens- Chelsea Waterfront

www.chelseawaterfront.com/website/Water%20Gardens.html covers Lots Road Power Station and the East Tower in Chelsea, whilst the West Tower and several other blocks are in Fulham. ▶

▶ Thames Walk

All the “photographs” of the completed development show three footbridges crossing Chelsea Creek. The largest, which will come from Lots Road immediately to the east of the Lots Road Power Station (now rebranded as the “Metropolitan Building”) is supposed to link up with the Thames Path in Fulham, but the plans do not show this.

Thames Bridges

A few years ago, there was a proposal for pedestrian and cycle bridge close to Battersea Railway Bridge running from Lombard Wharf in Battersea to Imperial Wharf. Now rebranded as the Diamond Jubilee Bridge, it was won a poll by readers of Building Design readers as a clear favorite for the next Thames crossing. It is likely to be paid for by contributions from a number development schemes and from the Mayor. It could happen quickly if it gets Mayoral support – it is a proposal in the Mayor’s Transport Strategy published on 21 June. ■



Battersea Riverside

Chelsea Pottery (1952-1997)

MICHAEL BACH

The Chelsea Pottery opened in 1952 at 13 Radnor Walk, formerly the premises of a coach builder, was the brainchild of David Rawnsley. The concept was a studio where painters and sculptors could work alongside each other, rather than as a commercial pottery. However, although popular, it was not a viable business model, so he set up the Rawnsley Academy where people of all ages could learn pottery.



Bohemian crowd at the pottery in 1960’s

By the 1960s the Chelsea Pottery had become very fashionable, from pottery depicting lawyers, fish, birds, animals, and women’s portraits. I remember buying some bowls in the mid-1960s, which made original Christmas presents. Much later, in 1991, my daughter took her GCE O Level pottery under the guidance of the formidably strict Mrs James.

Over the years, the fortunes of the Chelsea Pottery fluctuated, mainly due to events beyond their control – inflation, recessions, fluctuating exchange rates – bringing a number of financial crises. In 1994, quite suddenly, the Chelsea Pottery was forced to close. It felt like the end of

an era – but it was just part of “cleansing” process by which “low value” uses such as the pottery were squeezed out of Chelsea.

The story of the Chelsea Pottery mirrors the fate of Chelsea in the second half of the 20th century, blossoming in the 1960s Swinging London they are now collectors items.

Chelsea Barracks

TERENCE BENDIXSON

The new Chelsea Barracks, an enclave for the very rich plus a fringe of shared-ownership and affordable flats along Ebury Bridge Road, is beginning to take shape. A marbled marketing suite of Pharaonic grandeur is open for business in Ranelagh Grove and agents for Qatari ▶



Chelsea Barracks plan

▶ Diar, the developers, told a resident’s meeting on 27th June that sixty per cent of the first dwellings had been sold. These are flats in blocks across the road from the infirmary of the Royal Hospital, and houses, on a scale that would not be out of place in Belgravia, in two nearby, facing terraces.

The developers expect the whole of the northern end of the site to be complete by the end of next year and all detailed planning permissions for the rest of it to be agreed by the same date. Two restaurants underneath the first blocks of flats are intended to add activity to what will otherwise be a place more opulent than vibrant. The old Guards Chapel, now undergoing repair, will be in the hands of a trust and may become an art centre.

In a departure from normal practice, Qatari Diar have invited an array of architects to design what is, in effect, a new neighbourhood. Michael Squire has done the first flats and PDP (formerly Paul Davies) the first houses. Eric Parry and Piercy & Company (architects for the new North Kensington library) will come in later. Most of them produce very sleek, pared-down modern buildings but give their houses proportions that are familiar and first-floor windows that have balconies. ■



CGI of Chelsea Barracks from Chelsea Bridge Road

Membership Fees

Increase in membership fees: 2018

At a meeting of the Council on the 13th December 2016 it was agreed to increase the Membership Fees as follows:

- Single members from £15 to £20
- Household membership from £20 to £30

The fees have not been increased for many years but our costs keep rising. We are working hard to save on overheads and try to e-mail members rather than write to them. If you have an e-mail address but do not receive any from us please let us know.

Under the terms of The Direct Debit Guarantee we are required to advise you of this increase to your Direct Debit which will take effect from 1 January 2018.

Obituaries:

MICHAEL BACH

David Le Lay

David Le Lay, Chairman of the Chelsea Society for 22 years, died on 17 January. The funeral service, on 4 February, at St Luke's filled the church. The eulogy, by David's successor as chairman, Stuart Corbin, presented David's wide range of interests, and will form part of the obituary in the next Annual Report.

David's time as chairman was marked by a succession of exhibitions, ever more ambitious, and two conferences on the future of Chelsea. David set up and chaired special sub-committees to coordinate the dedicated team to deliver the event. David was famous for his lectures and Chelsea walks – all part of the Society's mission to make people aware of Chelsea's history.

As a practicing architect, often working in Chelsea, he debarred himself from

servicing on the Planning Committee. However, David saved his involvement for the big cases – such as Lots Road Power Station where he persuaded the RBKC Planning Committee to refuse the application, against the wishes of the Council's leadership, and spoke for the Society at the public inquiry. Although he helped persuade the Inspector to recommend dismissing the appeal, it was allowed by the Secretary of State. David was strongly against tall buildings, especially along the Thames, and gave evidence to a Government Select Committee on Tall Buildings.

A major showdown involved the proposed new infirmary at the Royal Hospital. David called a special Council meeting to discuss this very controversial case, which resulted in the Society objecting strongly to the scheme, but also the resignation of our President, Lord Salisbury, our Hon Secretary and our Hon Treasurer. The final outcome, however, vindicated the stance we took.

David provided strong leadership for the Society and promoted it as an active player in preserving the character of Chelsea. ■



David Le Lay

Paul Aitkenhead

It is with great regret that the Society announces the death on 5 May 2017 of Paul Aitkenhead. Paul lived in Draycott Avenue and was a member of the Council of the Society since 2012. He had also been a member of the Planning Committee of the Society for Hans-Brompton Ward until retiring due to his health.

Paul's most recent concerns were the condition of the King's Road, especially the neglect, lack of cleansing and the lack of bins, the bus shelter fiasco where the Clearchannel shelters disappeared along with any seating only to be replaced by "garden furniture".

He was known as a collector of antiquarian books and of antiquarian umbrellas. He could be found in pursuit of umbrellas at, for instance, Criterion Auctions in Upper Street, Islington and, when they needed repairs, he took them to that famous shop in New Oxford Street/High Holborn which has been selling walking sticks and the like since the 19th century. ■



Rubbish in the King's Road



All Pictures: Michael Bach

Chelsea Society Summer Meeting at Masterpiece: 5 July

MICHAEL BACH

This year's summer meeting was held at the Masterpiece 2017 London event in massive temporary structure on the South Grounds of the Royal Hospital. Masterpiece London, launched in 2010, sees itself as "the most imaginative and glamorous art and antiques fair in the world" and "an unmissable event at the height of the capital's summer arts season".

Members who bought tickets at £25 each were able to stroll round the dazzling display of art, jewellery and antiques targeted at an international market of people wanting expensive pieces of art, sculpture, and furniture to add the final touches to their London "home" or to take "home" to one of their other homes. It was a meeting place for dealers and their clients in a convivial and exclusive atmosphere. It was a large display of luxury goods for an international elite.

After admiring the exhibits about 100 Chelsea Society members met in a special enclosure for a wine reception. The pictures shown right try to capture the setting.



The long walk to the entrance



The Chelsea Society wine bar



Paul and Penny Knapman



Damian Greenish, Jennifer Grossman and Christopher Lenon

Dates for your Diary

Dates:

Date	Event	Location
5 July	Summer Party*	Masterpiece, South Grounds, Royal Hospital
18-29 September	Local Plan Examination in Public	Kensington Town Hall
25 September	Meeting with Chelsea Residents' Associations	Chelsea Town Hall
9 October	The Royal Yacht Britannia ; Commodore Morrow*	Chelsea Town Hall
30 October	Autumn Lecture*	Chelsea Town Hall
20 November	Annual General Meeting	Chelsea Town Hall

* Events requiring tickets

Bookings:

Bookings for Chelsea Society events, visits and lectures will be administered by **Cadogan Hall**.

You can book by:

- Phone on **0207-730-4500** and pay by card
- Sending a cheque payable to **Cadogan Hall, Sloane Terrace, London SW1X 9DQ**
- Visiting the Box Office in person.

Box Office hours are Monday-Saturday 10.00-18.00.

Get in Touch

We want to be able to communicate with you, especially so we can alert you when we need your support. If you have not yet done so please send your email address to **Allan Kelly at membership@chelseasociety.org.uk**

We are able to print and distribute this Newsletter three times in each year, but the Society's website is updated on a regular basis. If you want to see the latest news, do visit our website at least once a week at <http://chelseasociety.org.uk/>

Our website is at:

www.chelseasociety.org.uk

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The views expressed in this Newsletter are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the Chelsea Society.

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