



THE CHELSEA SOCIETY

THE CHELSEA SOCIETY WAS FOUNDED IN 1927 BY THE LOCAL HISTORIAN REGINALD BLUNT WITH THE AIM OF PROTECTING THE INTERESTS OF ALL WHO LIVE AND WORK HERE AND TO PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THE UNIQUE CHARACTER OF CHELSEA.

NEW CHAIRMAN ELECTED



The Council of The Chelsea Society has elected Dr. James Thompson to be its new Chairman, following the retirement of Mr. Damian Greenish. The new Chairman took office at the end of the Society's AGM on 21st November 2016.

Dr. James Thompson is an Honorary senior lecturer in psychology at London University, and has lived in Chelsea since 1982. He has been a member of The Chelsea Society since 1983.

He was drawn to Chelsea by the architecture, individual shops, mews houses, bohemian crowds, music, history, river views along the Embankment, and the exciting mix of cultural past and vivid quirky present. Within a year of moving to Chelsea he opposed a major planning application in his street, and since then has been Chairman of his local Residents' Association in the streets between the Physic Garden and the Royal Hospital.

In 2006 James led the "Save Sloane Square campaign, and since 2011 has chaired the King's Road Association of Chelsea Residents (KRACR) - campaigning particularly against large basement developments. He will retire from that Chairmanship in February 2017.

James holds membership card no. 20 at the Chelsea Physic Garden, and would have had an even lower number if he had responded more promptly to the first-ever membership application, hand-delivered by the Garden Curator to nearby streets in 1983.

James taught psychology and held clinics at the Middlesex Hospital Medical School, later University College London Medical School. His first job was as a researcher on brain-damaged children. He was clinical psychologist at Guy's Hospital Medical School, and later at the Institute of Psychiatry. He continues to publish academic papers.

He was depicted as a character in a play at the Royal Court, as a psychologist explaining the motivations of terrorists!



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As Chairman of the Society, James, like other Chairmen before him, will not be a member of the Society's Planning Committee.

Retiring Chairman



Damian Greenish (L) with the Society's President, John Simpson CBE

Damian Greenish is a solicitor, with special expertise in the field of leasehold property law.

He had been Chairman from 2011 until his retirement at the Society's AGM on 21st November 2016.

He has been an excellent Chairman, modernising the communications and activities of the Society and rewriting its Constitution to make the Society more transparent and consultative.

In recognition of his outstanding service to the Society he has been appointed to be one of its Vice-Presidents.

In his final Annual Report (which will be published in the Society's Annual Report for 2016 and on its website) Damian Greenish said "It has been an honour and privilege to have been the Chairman of this great Society and to have been able play some part in ensuring that the Society fulfils its primary objective to preserve and improve the amenities of Chelsea. During my time as Chairman, I have learnt an extraordinary amount about this place and met some fascinating Chelsea characters, many of whom I know will remain friends in years to come."

"As Chairman, I have attended three major Society Exhibitions; six Summer Meetings; something over 30 lectures and talks and visited many areas of Chelsea which I am not sure previously I knew existed. I have been consistently impressed by the extent to which people here really care about this extraordinary and unique area of London and how much time they are prepared to put in to preserving it. It is very special. I made the point before that the membership of this Society is increasing and we really should be very proud of that; there are not very many amenities societies who can say that. We remain extremely active and well supported."