



THE RICHMOND SOCIETY

REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2005

PATRONS

The Lord Attenborough of Richmond upon Thames, Mrs Rachel Dickson MBE RIBA (retd), Mr Bamber Gascoigne,
The Lord Watson of Richmond CBE

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

(8 meetings were held during the year)

Chairman Alan Saunders	Hon Secretary Patricia Spaight	Hon Treasurer Andrew Coleman
John Govett <i>co-opted July 04</i>	Andrew Howard-Smith <i>co-opted Sept</i>	Janice Kay
Peter Locke	Neil Maybin	Beryl Pethick
Sylvia Ruggier	David Shaw	Peter Willan
Jill Woolf		Richard Young <i>co-opted Nov 04</i>

Honorary Reporting Accountant Geoffrey Hyde

COMMITTEES

PLANNING Richard Young *Chairman*, Douglas Barrell, Ron Berryman, Stuart Crichton, George Dunton, Janet Locke, Peter Locke

COMMUNICATIONS Beryl Pethick, Janice Kay, Sylvia Ruggier, Patricia Spaight, Jill Woolf

GRAFFITI & FLYPOSTING Neil Maybin *Chairman*, Peter Locke, Julian Paxton, Torben Petersen (*to June*), Noelle Poole, Derek Robinson, David Shaw

INFRASTRUCTURE Neil Maybin, Torben Petersen (*to June*)

TOWN CENTRE, LICENSING & RELATED ISSUES Peter Willan

LANDSCAPING & RIVERSIDE John Govett, David Shaw

Newsletter helpers and Neighbourhood Area Distributors

Co-ordinator: Ailsa Long

Mrs Alexander, Mr & Mrs F Barnes, Ms Enid Black, Miss J Crawley, Mrs Ginny Curry, Ms Jani Denison, Miss Eleanor Due-Lund, Mr D J Eade, Mrs Heather Edgar, Ms Beryl Gale, Mr Colin Ganderton, Mrs Debbie Gooday, Mrs Edith Griffiths, Miss Irene Hainworth, Mr Oliver Hayward, Mrs A Hobson, Mrs Jenny Hodder, Miss J Jennings, Mrs D King, Mr RS Knight, Mrs Sylvia Marder, Ms Dolly May, John & Isabel Moses, Mrs Liliane Palmer, Mr Mike Peacock, Mrs Violet Peacock, Mrs Biddy Petersen, Ms Rebecca Phelps, Miss J Price, Mr & Mrs Rivett-Carnac, Mr D Robinson, Mrs Sylvia Ruggier, Mrs Sheila Ryde, Miss Roberta Turner, Miss Ann Twinn, Ms Marion Shoosmith, Miss V van Straubensee, Mrs Patricia Urch, Mrs Liz Velluet, Mrs Beryl Ward, Mrs Fenella Wardon, Mrs V Winning, David & Jill Woolf, Mrs Jan Young

MEMBERSHIP or AFFILIATION of the SOCIETY to OTHER BODIES

The Civic Trust, Council for Voluntary Service in Richmond, The Environmental Forum, Environment Trust for Richmond upon Thames, Heathrow Association for the Control of Aircraft Noise, The London Forum of Amenity & Civic Societies,

Richmond Environmental Information Centre, Richmond upon Thames Arts Council

The Richmond Society also nominates members to serve on

the Richmond Parish Lands Charity, the Police Community Consultative Group, the Petersham Trust and the Thames Landscape Strategy Community Advisory Group

THE OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY are

- to campaign to preserve and enhance Richmond's historic character, unique features and amenities
- to promote high standards in planning, building and landscaping in or affecting Richmond
- to protect the quality of life, balancing the interests of residents, business and visitors
- to encourage an active interest in Richmond and its community and to provide a focus for members to meet and socialise

The Richmond Society is an unincorporated body with the status of a Registered Charity – No.285805

www.richmondsociety.co.uk

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

This has been quite a momentous year for the Society with major issues facing us in key areas of traditional concern, such as licensing, planning, trees and landscaping and Heathrow. As I reported last year, I am enormously grateful for the hard work put in by members of your Executive Committee, particularly those leading our various committees. As you may recall, last year saw the retirement of many stalwarts but I am happy to say that our new colleagues have maintained the tradition of active engagement with the local authority and other interested parties. They do this in a constructive and professional manner that we believe has paid dividends.

No more so has this been true than in the contentious area of licensing where Peter Willan has campaigned tirelessly to hold back the tide of extended opening hours and anti-social behaviour. Our local MP Susan Kramer paid tribute recently to our work in this area which certainly pre-dates the current round of licence extensions. An early success was the move to make Richmond an area of cumulative impact, blocking potential new licensed premises in the town centre. More recently, we have tried to support local residents in objecting to individual applications. We are not sanguine about the outcome although it could have been worse and we will be monitoring matters closely.

Our Planning committee under Richard Young has maintained its usual high standards of reviewing planning applications and, with Peter Locke presenting, made a powerful contribution to the successful fight against *The Knoll's* bid for retrospective approval. We particularly welcomed the Forum meeting held in September where the Chair of the Council Planning committee and the senior officer took us through the planning process. Most recently, we have been reviewing proposals to light Richmond Bridge and are unlikely to support it, a view supported by those who have responded to our consultation. Under Neil Maybin, we opposed any extension of night flights at Heathrow with a successful outcome but we now have to fight the challenge of a proposed end to runway alternation which would be bad news for Richmond.

The Arcadia project was of course underway this year and John Govett, our head of Landscaping and Riverside, has been actively engaged. Our stance is that of a critical friend, supporting the grand design but challenging when we think appropriate. We thought it important to send a positive signal of support and have made two contributions, from internal funds and from our recent appeal, namely for trees and new bollards along the riverside.

Inevitably, there will be occasions when the Society is asked to come down on one side or the other on an issue or in support of a particular group of residents. Because we necessarily have to speak for residents across the spectrum of opinion and location, this will not always be possible. We are consulted by the Council on your behalf on a variety of issues and believe we retain our credibility by avoiding being seen as a lobby group with an activist or campaigning mission, though there are doubtless times when some people have felt that. Getting the balance right in terms of publicity is always an issue and one your committee is always happy to review.

We have had our usual excellent programme of lectures, organised as ever by Janice Kay and an exciting line up is promised for next year. I think all who attended the summer party in July at Queensberry House gardens felt it was one of the best ever in glorious surroundings. Our thanks to Jill Woolf who now steps down as our social organiser and a welcome to Andrew Howard-Smith who has already taken over from her.

I am often told by members how much they enjoy the quarterly newsletter and I would like to acknowledge the tremendous hard work put in by Pat Spaight our Secretary, both on the newsletter but also more widely for the Society. Finally, may I thank Ailsa Long, Sylvia Marder and all our helpers in getting the publication to you.

In conclusion, thank you too, our members, for your continued support. I hope you think we do a good job on your behalf and that you encourage friends and neighbours to join.

ALAN SAUNDERS

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ON THE WORK OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2005

The members of the Executive Committee, in their capacity as Trustees, present their report on the affairs of the Society, together with the financial statements for the year ended 30 September 2005.

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

In the year under review there were seven **public meetings** in the Vestry Hall, one of them held jointly with the local branch of the River Thames Society. In addition a joint meeting with the Environment Trust for Richmond upon Thames was held in the restored Grove Gardens Chapel. It was decided this year to change the date of the Annual Awards ceremony from September to October, so this does not come into the year under review.

In May the Society participated as usual in the **May Fair** on Richmond Green. All our usual social events were very well supported by members and included the **Christmas Party**, the **Summer Party** held in the magnificent garden of Queensberry House, and a **Pub Lunch** in March at the *Lass of Richmond Hill*.

The summer evening **Heritage Walks** were as popular as ever in their 26th year. In the seven individually themed guided walks Paul Velluet and Charles Keggen were assisted by expert volunteer leaders Johanna Coombes, Jason Debney, David McDowall and Val Roberts.

All events were fully reported in the Richmond Society newsletters and in the local press.

LANDSCAPING AND RIVERSIDE

The Executive Committee agreed terms of reference for this committee and its new name to reflect the increasing focus on the work being carried out by London's Arcadia and on the LBRuT preparation of a bid for Heritage Lottery funding for enhancement of the Terrace Gardens.

Consultations have continued through the year on various aspects of London's Arcadia work, in particular the Terrace Field and the Bridge House Gardens. Two donations, each of £1,000, have been made by the Society to Arcadia, first towards tree planting by Cholmondeley Walk, and second, partly funded by members' specific donations, towards the refurbishment of two cast iron bollards by St Helena Terrace.

Agreement was reached with the Council to modify some of their proposed changes to the Terrace Gardens, which would have involved the re-siting of the River God statue. Consultation has also taken place with the Council to encourage the rebuilding of the summer house, the repair of the greenhouse and of the balustrade around the fishpond.

The attention of the Council's tree department was drawn to a number of trees in the town centre that required new supports or replacement, and discussions have been held with both Arcadia and the Council regarding the appropriate level of tree maintenance, in order to preserve the views from the hill.

This committee has participated in the Society's detailed response to the Council's recent Local Development Framework Questionnaire.

Since the year end Patrick Doolan has joined the committee.

ROADS, TRAFFIC & PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

With the Committee under strength this year, the main effort has gone into preparing the Society's response to the Stage Two of the Department for Transport's consultation on night flying restrictions. Although Heathrow night flights are not now to be increased, there is still no plan to end them, nor to reduce aircraft noise in the early morning. Much remains to be done, with the proposed consultation on ending runway alternation now imminent. Members who are interested in this, or any other aspect of roads, traffic or public infrastructure, will be made very welcome if they would like to help in the Committee's work.

TOWN CENTRE, LICENSING AND RELATED ISSUES

The year started with the Council rejecting the Society's proposal in November 2004 for a Cumulative Impact Policy (CIP) that would limit the growth of the licensed economy in Richmond town. Undeterred, we eventually got unanimous decision by the full Council to support a CIP subject to consultation. Postal and observational research undertaken by the Erskine Corporation in April 2005 supported the need, and a CIP was then finalised in June. The Policy has been used successfully, albeit infrequently, in the recent re-licensing but its chief benefit will be in preventing relatively low risk premises with valuable extended hours now converting into higher risk pubs and bars. We argued unsuccessfully that the policy should restrict the extension of hours, as adopted in other parts of the Country where it has been invaluable in restraining the push for extended hours.

The Erskine report on low level alcohol related anti-social behaviour in the town had additional benefit in providing detailed evidence of incidents and their impact on the quality of life, which was used to good effect by objectors during the recent re-licensing. It demonstrated the importance of well researched evidence and the need for monitoring in the future.

Re-licensing was compressed into four months from July with the Licensing Act 2003 coming into effect on 24 November 2005. The Society, in conjunction with the Friends of Richmond Green, actively sought to influence the licence variations in the town centre and beyond where the risks were relatively high. In June we issued a joint Position Statement to the Council, police and others which urged there be no increase in opening hours. The view taken, based on evidence from the Erskine report, was that the extension of hours would lead to more anti-social behaviour which would occur after public transport had ceased and when residents needed their sleep. The stance was not just about poor behaviour because many of the businesses in the evening economy are responsible and low risk. The issue is also about the activity of several thousand people in a residential town after midnight and up to 3:30am. We also distributed to 500 residents a guide on *how to object* to licence variations. The approach adopted was to alert residents in the vicinity of each premises and then to offer assistance in making the case against the variations and, if requested, to represent interested parties at the relevant hearings. This involved attendance at 25 hearings covering a variety of venues.

We reported in our Winter Newsletter 2005 on the outcome of the re-licensing. Overall, about 50% of the capacity increase sought has been granted resulting in an increase of around 16% over each week but nearly 25% on Fridays and Saturdays with last closing at 3:00am. It is impossible to gauge the impact of the Society's efforts but at least the approach successfully brought before the licensing panels the evidence and concerns of residents in respect of most of the pubs and bars in the town.

The process has highlighted the major gap in defining the problem the town faces. For every incident the police attend there are over 10 low level alcohol related anti-social behaviour incidents - as many as 200 on a Friday night. The incidents such as urinating and shouting pervade the town and are momentary and random; they may not be serious individually but cumulatively they erode the quality of life for residents and others. It is not realistic to expect the police to monitor or deal with this problem given their limited resources and priorities. Until this problem is recognised there can be no solution to the anti-social behaviour problems in the town where 54% of respondents to the Erskine survey said they are now deterred from using the town's facilities at night because they regularly encounter crime, disorder and nuisance and 60% said they experienced sleeping problems for similar reasons.

The Society will need to focus its efforts this year in conjunction with the police and the Council's Environmental Health, Licensing and Planning departments on the subject, especially since control of the existing risks and additional ones from re-licensing rely on monitoring and enforcement.

PLANNING

This year's Planning Committee has been extremely fortunate in securing the services of two new members. With Robin Wade and Derek Robinson joining us, we now have an enlarged and energetic team, under the new Chairman Richard Young, which has tackled various Planning issues during the past 12 months and now looks forward to the challenges of the year ahead.

The Committee has held 11 main meetings during the year. 113 Planning Applications have been reviewed, comments on 63 of which having been submitted to the Council. Inevitably these Applications have ranged from proposals for the ever-changing shopfronts in the town centre to modest - and not-so modest - domestic extensions and developments and proposals for changes-of-use which the Committee has often felt to be detrimental to the delicate balance in the Town. Representations have also been made on unauthorised developments, mainly advertising displays of one sort or another.

Further activity has included a meeting with the Borough Planning Officers at the Planning Services Forum and the submission of proposals for improved pedestrian safety in the Town, including a reduction of the speed limit to 20mph and the enhancement of pedestrian crossings, signs and other items of design in public spaces. We have also considered proposals for additional Buildings of Townscape Merit (BTMs) and have commented at length on the Council's Local Development Framework draft proposals which will ultimately replace the Unitary Development Plan. In addition, comments have been submitted on draft proposals for the policies on Planning Obligations which are destined to replace the current and inconsistent Section 106 Agreement process.

The protection of the Strategic London Views from King Henry's Mound in Richmond Park has been a cause for considerable concern, and a robust case for the retention of the current constraints was submitted to Mayor Livingstone as part of the current consultation process. During the year the Committee has also kept a careful watch on the progress of the retrospective Planning Application process for The Knoll. The Council's proposals for the lighting of Richmond Bridge have concerned a number of Members; the Winter Newsletter was to include an outline of the issues involved and Members were to be invited to submit their opinions so that a considered response could be submitted to the Council.

Finally, in the early part of the year much enjoyable work was carried-out on the design and production of new exhibition boards for the Society's stand at the May Fair. We hope that the sharper graphics and more comprehensive information in both written and pictorial form will help to illustrate the work of the Society as whole to the public at large.

As ever, members with an interest in the protection and enhancement of the built environment in Richmond and who feel that they have the time and commitment to participate in the work of the Society are invited to join the Planning Committee.

GRAFFITI AND LITTER

With the Council now much more active in combating graffiti there has been a very welcome reduction in graffiti in our area of interest. The appointment of a council graffiti officer, an expansion of the graffiti removal teams, and extension of free graffiti removal to small businesses has proved effective.

In 2005 the Graffiti Committee therefore concentrated on two areas. Despite progress, railway graffiti remains a problem, particularly by the tracks and on the side of the railway river bridge. And elsewhere in the town, graffiti continues at a low level. In the coming year we plan to continue to press the rail operators for improvements, and to supplement the council's efforts by identifying and reporting those graffiti tags which remain in the town and hill areas.

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP in the year to 30 September 2005 was 916 - made up of 359 Individual members, 552 Household members, three Corporate members and two Non-Profit making organisations.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

2004/05 was another successful year for the Society. In addition to carrying out its usual programme of activities, the Society made donations of £2,000 to the Father Thames Trust to help facilitate the Arcadia in the City project. Half this amount was raised from donors and half came from the Society's existing resources.

Income for the year was £9,850. This is £4,259 less than last year but income for both years was impacted by fundraising activities for projects. Excluding project fundraising in both years, total income would have been at almost exactly the same level. Once again we must thank our loyal members who support the Society through subscriptions, donations and attendance at our events.

Expenditure for the year was £8,687. This is £3,182 lower than last year but expenditure for both years was impacted by the cost of projects; our £2,000 donations in 2004/05 and the £5,334 cost of an information board in 2003/04. Excluding project costs from both years, our expenditure for the year was at a very similar total level to 2003/04 although there were some changes in its composition. In particular the Society took advantage of savings in some cost areas to invest in renewing the display material used at the Richmond May Fair and at other events.

Overall the Society recorded a surplus for the year of £1,163 (2003/04: £2,240) which was added to reserves.

For the Society to function successfully, it must maintain an adequate financial position with sufficient reserves to finance its operations. The trustees are satisfied that the financial position continues to be satisfactory with the major proportion of the Society's reserves invested in an interest-bearing deposit account.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The major risks to which the Society is exposed, as identified by the trustees, have been reviewed during the year and the trustees are satisfied that action has been taken where appropriate to manage those risks.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S RESPONSIBILITIES FOR FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Charity law requires the Executive Committee to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Society and of the income and expenditure for the year then ended. In preparing those financial statements, the Executive Committee is required to select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently, make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent, and prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Society will continue in business. The Executive Committee has responsibility for maintaining proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the Society and enable it to ensure that the financial statements comply with charity regulations. It also has responsibility for safeguarding the assets of the Society and for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

By Order of the Executive Committee

Patricia Spaight
Secretary

3 November 2005

The Richmond Society

Statement of financial activities for the year ended 30 September 2005

	2005	2004
	£	£
Incoming resources		
<i>Voluntary income</i>		
Subscription income	3,962	4,194
Donations	1,932	3,732
Grants	-	2,400
<i>Income from operations</i>		
Publications	304	262
Social events & walks	2,269	2,371
<i>Investment income</i>		
Interest income	1,383	1,150
Total incoming resources	<u>9,850</u>	<u>14,109</u>
Resources expended		
<i>Cost of generating funds</i>		
Social events & walks	1,772	1,962
Fund-raising & marketing	236	212
<i>Cost of charitable activities</i>		
Trees & landscaping	2,000	345
Information boards & plaques	-	5,334
Newsletters	1,261	1,556
Annual awards	-	345
Public meetings	335	258
Subscriptions	225	250
Printing, reports & postage	863	475
Council agendas & reports	162	147
Other running costs	1,667	841
Management & administration	166	144
Total resources expended	<u>8,687</u>	<u>11,869</u>
Net incoming resources before transfers	1,163	2,240
Transfers between funds	-	-
Net movement of funds for the year	1,163	2,240
Opening fund balances	16,873	14,633
Closing fund balances	<u>18,036</u>	<u>16,873</u>

Balance sheet at 30 September 2005

	2005	2004
	£	£
Fixed assets		
Display stands & projector	398	449
Current assets		
Stock of awards plaques	240	240
Debtors & prepayments	1,047	976
Deposit account	28,801	30,581
Cash at bank and in hand	840	451
	<u>30,928</u>	<u>32,248</u>
Current liabilities: amounts falling due within 1 year		
Creditors & accruals	10,268	12,315
Deferred income from life subscriptions	926	896
	<u>11,194</u>	<u>13,211</u>
Net current assets	19,734	19,037
Total assets less current liabilities	<u>20,132</u>	<u>19,486</u>
Liabilities and charges due after more than one year		
Deferred income from life subscriptions	2,096	2,613
Net assets	<u>18,036</u>	<u>16,873</u>
Funds		
General	15,533	14,120
Project	(12)	69
Landscaping & Trees	2,515	2,684
	<u>18,036</u>	<u>16,873</u>

Approved by the Executive Committee on 3 November 2005

A Saunders – Chair

AM Coleman – Treasurer

Trustees statement: The information contained in the summary financial statements is taken from the full accounts and includes details relating to the Statement of Financial Activities and the Balance Sheet. The audited accounts were approved and signed by the Executive Committee in their capacity as trustees on 3 November 2005 and will be submitted to the Charity Commission for England & Wales within the relevant period. The summarised financial statements may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the financial affairs of the Society. For further information the full accounts, the report of the independent examiner and the trustees' annual report should be consulted. Copies can be obtained from the Secretary for a nominal donation for printing and postage.

Alan Saunders (Chair)