



THE RICHMOND SOCIETY

REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2006

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 | Andrew Howard-Smith <i>co-opted 2005</i> | Janice Kay |
| Peter Locke | Neil Maybin | Beryl Pethick (<i>died Aug 06</i>) |
| Sylvia Ruggier | David Shaw | Peter Willan |
| Jill Woolf | | Richard Young <i>co-opted 2004</i> |

Honorary Reporting Accountant Geoffrey Hyde

COMMITTEES

PLANNING Richard Young *Chairman*, Douglas Barrell, Ron Berryman, George Dunton, Janet Locke, Peter Locke, Derek Robinson, Robin Wade

COMMUNICATIONS Andrew Howard-Smith, Janice Kay, Beryl Pethick (*to Aug 06*), Sylvia Ruggier, Patricia Spaight

GRAFFITI & FLYPOSTING Neil Maybin *Chairman*, Peter Locke, Julian Paxton, Noelle Poole, Derek Robinson, David Shaw

INFRASTRUCTURE Neil Maybin

TOWN CENTRE, LICENSING & RELATED ISSUES Peter Willan

LANDSCAPING & RIVERSIDE John Govett *Chairman*, Patrick Doolan, 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, 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 R Knight, Mrs Sylvia Marder, John & Isabel Moses, Mrs Liliane Palmer, Mr Mike Peacock, Mrs Violet Peacock, Mrs Bidy Petersen, Ms Rebecca Phelps, Miss J Price, Mr & Mrs Rivett-Carnac, Mr D Robinson, Mrs Sylvia Ruggier, Miss Roberta Turner, Miss Ann Twinn, Ms Marion Shoosmith, Miss V van Straubenzee, 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,
Environment Trust for Richmond upon Thames, The London Forum of Amenity & Civic Societies,
Richmond Environmental Information Centre, Heathrow Association for the Control of Aircraft Noise,
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

The Society continues to be active across a broad range of issues in our traditional areas of interest such as planning, landscaping and riverside, licensing and the town centre. As ever, I would like to acknowledge the considerable body of work put in by our various committees who combine professional expertise with a strong commitment to supporting the community of which we are a part. Most of us derive considerable pleasure from living in Richmond but not many of us have the time or inclination to step forward as volunteers to serve that community.

The various committee heads report subsequently on their activities. Now that we are past the rollout of the new Licensing Act, there are fewer licensing applications for **Peter Willan** to scrutinise but he is very engaged in monitoring the consequences of increased licensing hours and evidence of anti-social behaviour. He is also leading our review of the Gambling Act, a new field of enquiry for us.

The Planning committee maintains its usual diligence in reviewing planning applications and takes pains to engage with council officers over issues of concern. They are pushing ahead with their proposals on pedestrian safety and traffic flows in the town centre and campaigning against the proliferation of A-boards littering our pavements.

We have continued to act as a critical friend of the Arcadia project, supporting most of their projects while making constructive suggestions for improvement. Most of those projects have now been completed in the Richmond area but we remain actively involved in the Authority-led improvements to the Terrace Gardens and have been involved in the Petersham Nurseries debate.

Our Awards evening in October was as usual a great success and we are grateful to **Richard Young** in particular for the considerable effort and professionalism he always displays on the occasion. Our lecture programme has maintained its usual level of interest and I am very grateful to **Janice Kay** for her continuing ingenuity in picking new speakers.

Many members look to us for our social activities of course. Many thanks to **Paul Velluet** and **Charles Keggen** for maintaining our summer walks programme, with some very interesting tours. Above all, the summer party crowned a glorious summer with a delightful afternoon at Trumpeters House and our thanks go to the Van Dedems for their splendid hospitality.

That party was sadly the last occasion when most of saw **Beryl Pethick** who passed away in August. She was wonderful company and an assiduous worker for the Society in her role as deputy chair, complete with puzzles and games.

As we flagged in the newsletter, next year will be our **50th anniversary** and we are wondering how best to commemorate it. We hope to run another of our projects but also to involve young people in some way and we will certainly ask our patrons for their views.

In closing, may I also thank those who operate unseen. The indefatigable **Pat Spaight** without whom the newsletter would never get published and who keeps us all up to the mark. Our treasurer **Andrew Coleman**, who keeps us comfortably solvent. **Andrew Howard-Smith** who has taken over with aplomb responsibility for our social events, and finally to **Ailsa Long, Ginny Curry** and the team of helpers who ensure you receive the newsletter.

We have as our aspiration to take our membership over the 1000 mark for our anniversary. Please encourage your friends and neighbours to join: the larger we are, the more we can influence matters. I do hope you find your membership of the Society worthwhile. Please keep supporting us.

ALAN SAUNDERS

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ON THE WORK OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2006

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 2006.

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP in the year to 30 September 2006 was 926 - made up of 368 Individual members, 554 Household members, two Corporate members and two Non-Profit making organisations. There are also 44 Honorary Members.

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 the **Annual Review and Awards** ceremony was held in October, followed as usual by Wine and Cheese.

In May the Society participated as usual in the **May Fair** on Richmond Green and in July also in the **Richmond Park Open Weekend**. All our usual social events were very well attended by members and included the **Christmas Party** held after the AGM, the **Summer Party** in the magnificent garden of Trumpeters House, and a **Pub Lunch** in March at the *Lass of Richmond Hill*.

It was the 27th year of our summer evening **Heritage Walks** organised and led by Paul Velluet and Charles Keggen; the seven walks were very well attended and made a welcome contribution to our Trees and Landscaping Fund.

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

LANDSCAPING AND RIVERSIDE

The completion of work on Bridge House Gardens in early summer brought an end to the major projects undertaken by London's Arcadia in the centre of Richmond. The Society had successfully argued for an increase in the green ground cover at the lower end of the gardens, and a number of members helped with the planting. The result is considered to be a significant improvement to this important open space.

In February a length of new hedging was planted along the A316 by Twickenham Bridge, to help screen the view of traffic from the towpath. This was sponsored with a donation from the Society.

Much of the committee's focus during the year has been directed to the proposed renovation of the Terrace Gardens. The committee submitted comments on the detailed Conservation Management Plan, produced by consultants for the council, in preparation for applying for Heritage Lottery Funding. In the event the Council opted not to apply for HLF, and the Society is now represented on the Advisory Committee, which has been meeting regularly, to give input on the formulation of what will now inevitably be a somewhat more modest restoration exercise.

Following the very significant increase in the Council's budget for tree planting and maintenance, the Society has not sponsored any further street tree planting, but the committee continues to monitor the state of trees in the town and to notify the Tree Department where trees appear to need attention.

The Society raised with the Council at a number of levels concern at the parking of cars on Petersham Meadows by customers of the Petersham Nurseries and Restaurant. The Council's six months notice to the nurseries to terminate their licence to access the meadows expires in January 2007.

PLANNING

During the last twelve months, the Society's Planning Committee has continued its varied and interesting work with the consideration and review of an array of often challenging planning proposals of differing sizes and complexity.

The Committee has held 12 general meetings and has also met on a further five occasions to deal with particular issues including pre-Application design proposals, Council draft planning initiatives and Design Briefs. 115 Planning Applications have been reviewed during this period, comments on 55 of which having been submitted to the Council. It is important to stress that not all such submissions have been by way of objections to particular Applications and it is always refreshing to be able to write in support of proposals where they are considered to be likely to add to the improvement and environmental well-being of the Town.

The adopted UDP included plans for the sale of two Council sites, the car park in Friars Lane and Terrace Yard, the former maintenance site in Petersham Road by the Terrace Gardens. The Council produced draft Design Guides for both of these sites on which the Society made a number of detailed comments and proposals. The finally adopted documents incorporated some, but not all, of the comments and the Society is now waiting for the next stage of the process when development proposals are submitted to the Council. It will be essential that on both key sites, the very best design solutions are eventually selected by the Council and the Society will vigorously object to any weakening of this position.

The annual meeting with the Borough Planning Officers at the Planning Services Forum took place in early October and representatives of the Society were able to discuss a variety of planning issues including the planning applications' process and the contents of a number of new design guides prepared by the Council. Of particular note has been the recent publication of the Council's Public Space Design Guide which sets-out a wide range of design issues including paving, signs, lighting, soft landscaping and street furniture. The Society will be watching with interest to see how and when the guidelines are implemented and key Town-centre improvements established. Preliminary discussions have taken place with Council Officers regarding draft proposals for improvements to the Town centre and it is anticipated that further more formal consultation will take place in the New Year. We have also been lobbying hard for the rationalisation and in many cases the elimination of "A" boards in the Town.

The Society was disappointed with the outcome of the retrospective planning application for The Knoll in Ormond Road. Despite our submitting written objections and also speaking out on the design issues involved, design per-se was eventually considered not to be an issue by the Council in the context of modifications and alterations proposed and the application was finally approved by the Council. The process will have been mystifying to many members but Planning Law allows such applications to be made and Councils and Planning Committees must judge such applications on their own merit with no particular regard to the differences between the original consent and the modifications as built.

Finally, a small information plaque for the Croyley Memorial at St Mary Magdalene has been designed by committee member Robin Wade and is due to be installed shortly. This plaque, which provides simple background information, has been donated by the Society following the Commendation Award for the memorial's restoration last year.

Any Member with an interest in the protection and enhancement of the built environment in Richmond, particularly with a specific knowledge and experience of Town Planning and who has the time and commitment to participate in the work of the Society is warmly encouraged to join the Society's Planning Committee.

TOWN CENTRE, LICENSING AND RELATED ISSUES

The Society has had to deal with far fewer licensing issues this last year compared to the previous year with its deluge of re-licensing of pubs and bars under the new licensing Act. But there have been some new licence applications, variations and appeals that we have dealt with. Also, residents have sought help and advice with regard to nearby premises causing problems. We have generally advised that residents should seek to mediate, while collecting evidence before rushing into a licence Review and as yet there have been no Reviews in respect of the town's licensed premises.

On the national front we were involved in organising a successful conference in March in London for residents from around the country and their amenity groups with the aim of presenting the residents' case to the Government for greater protection under the licensing Act.

At this stage we can only give anecdotal evidence about the impact on the town of the re-licensing in 2005. The increasing numbers attracted to the town in the evenings to visit the pubs and bars and the associated binge drinking and resultant anti-social behaviour had become a serious problem before the new Act. While the problems concerning licensed premises may not have become worse this year, the situation does not appear to have improved. Also, there does seem to have been a shift in disturbance to later more sensitive hours. The problems in the town's open spaces, particularly on the Green, have without question increased and much of this has to do with off-sales and underage drinking, which the Act by and large is powerless to deal with.

There are grounds for optimism in that the distinction between crime and low-level antisocial behaviour is increasingly being recognised by the authorities. In a relatively low crime borough it is the 'asb' that erodes peoples' quality of life and it requires different methods of measurement and response than in the case of more serious crime. Hopefully, before next April comprehensive plans and resources will be ready to deal with these issues in 2007 and we are working with the Council and police on the subject.

The Society has recently responded to the Council's consultation on its draft Gambling Policy required under the new Gambling Act which becomes effective in September 2007. We have raised concerns at what may be a lucrative market for gambling in the evenings with the 10,000 visitors already attracted to the town. There are signs the gambling industry is already moving up-market and the pubs and bars are expanding their gambling activities. Gambling and alcohol could be a potent mix. We are concerned that residents will have limited grounds for raising objections to new gambling facilities under provisions of the new Act. We have encouraged the Council to pass a resolution not to have a casino in the borough. This may not become an issue for some time because only 17 new casinos are allowed in the country at the moment and Richmond has not bid for any of these.

We will be giving increasing thought to the effects of the smoking ban due to come into effect next year. It will probably increase the pressure for alfresco drinking with potential for disturbance to residents.

During the year we worked with the police and University College, London on setting up a web site for gathering information from residents on anti-social behaviour. The initial response was encouraging but there needs to be thought on how to engage and maintain peoples' interest in providing valuable information about the quality of their surroundings.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Income for the year was £9,121. This is £729 less than last year but represents an excellent result since last year's income benefited by £987 of donations towards our grant to Arcadia. Once again our thanks are due to our loyal members who support the Society through subscriptions, donations and attendance at our events.

Expenditure for the year was £5,920. This is £2,767 lower than last year. Last year's expenditure was higher as a result of the Arcadia grant of £2,000 and the cost of refurbishing the format of our display boards used at the May Fair and other events. Excluding these factors, expenditure was broadly similar between the two years.

Overall the Society recorded a surplus for the year of £3,201 (2004/05: £1,163) which was added to reserves. One of the reasons for the higher surplus was the absence of any landscaping or project expenditure this year.

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 2006

The Richmond Society

Statement of financial activities for the year ended 30 September 2006

Balance sheet at 30 September 2006

| | 2006 | 2005 | | 2006 | 2005 |
|--|---------------|---------------|---|---------------|---------------|
| | £ | £ | | £ | £ |
| Incoming resources | | | Fixed assets | | |
| <i>From generated funds</i> | | | Display stands & projector | 463 | 398 |
| Subscription income | 3,878 | 3,962 | | | |
| Donations | 1,064 | 1,954 | Current assets | | |
| Grants | - | 30 | Stock of awards plaques | 240 | 240 |
| Events | 2,473 | 2,120 | Debtors & prepayments | 955 | 1,047 |
| Interest income | 1,339 | 1,383 | Deposit account | 31,290 | 28,801 |
| <i>From charitable activities</i> | | | Cash at bank and in hand | 776 | 840 |
| Publications | 241 | 304 | | <u>33,261</u> | <u>30,928</u> |
| Walks | 126 | 97 | | | |
| Total incoming resources | <u>9,121</u> | <u>9,850</u> | Current liabilities: amounts falling due within 1 year | | |
| Resources expended | | | Creditors & accruals | 9,887 | 10,268 |
| <i>Cost of generating funds</i> | | | Deferred income from life subscriptions | 424 | 926 |
| Events | 2,128 | 1,772 | | <u>10,311</u> | <u>11,194</u> |
| Other fund-raising costs | - | 236 | Net current assets | 22,950 | 19,734 |
| <i>Cost of charitable activities</i> | | | | | |
| Trees & landscaping | - | 2,000 | Total assets less current liabilities | <u>23,413</u> | <u>20,132</u> |
| Newsletters | 1,475 | 1,261 | Liabilities and charges due after more than one year | | |
| Public meetings | 305 | 230 | Deferred income from life subscriptions | 2,176 | 2,096 |
| Subscriptions | 225 | 225 | | | |
| Printing, reports & postage | 352 | 863 | Net assets | <u>21,237</u> | <u>18,036</u> |
| Other running costs | 1,325 | 1,829 | | | |
| Governance costs | <u>110</u> | <u>271</u> | Funds | | |
| Total resources expended | <u>5,920</u> | <u>8,687</u> | General | 17,778 | 15,533 |
| Net incoming resources before transfers | <u>3,201</u> | <u>1,163</u> | Project | - | (12) |
| Transfers between funds | - | - | Landscaping & Trees | 3,459 | 2,515 |
| Net movement of funds for the year | <u>3,201</u> | <u>1,163</u> | | <u>21,237</u> | <u>18,036</u> |
| Opening fund balances | <u>18,036</u> | <u>16,873</u> | | | |
| Closing fund balances | <u>21,237</u> | <u>18,036</u> | | | |

Approved by the Executive Committee on 3 November 2006

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 2006 and, to the extent required, 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)