



THE RICHMOND SOCIETY

REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2007

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	Sylvia Ruggier
David Shaw	Peter Willan	Richard Young

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, Sylvia Ruggier, Patricia Spaight

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

Stuffing Party host: Ginny Curry

Mr & Mrs F Barnes, Mrs Judith Becker, Ms Enid Black, Miss J Crawley, Ms Jani Denison, Mrs Heather Edgar, Mrs Debbie Gooday, Mrs Edith Griffiths, Adam Harrison, Mrs Bella Hobson, Mrs Jenny Hodder, Mrs Doreen King, Mr R Knight, Max Lancaster, Michael Loader, Clive Long, Mrs Liliane Palmer, Mrs Violet Peacock, Mrs Bidy Petersen, Ms Rebecca Phelps, Mrs Poole, Mrs Rivett-Carnac, Derek Robinson, Mrs Sylvia Ruggier, Ms Marion Shoosmith, Mrs Roberta Turner, Miss Ann Twinn, Miss V van Straubenzee, Mrs Patricia Urch, Mrs Liz Velluet, Mrs Fenella Wardon, Ms Margaret Walsh, Mrs Jan Young

MEMBERSHIP or AFFILIATION of the SOCIETY to OTHER BODIES

The Civic Trust, The 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 year completed has of course been our 50th in existence and that is some achievement for a local amenity society supported entirely by volunteers. We paid tribute to the early pioneers and all who followed at our Jubilee Celebration in September at the Parish Church, when our four patrons joined us in an evening of celebration of those fifty years. We also engaged the young people of the community with a memorable evening at Christ's School, as students of varying ages put on a splendid interpretation of Richmond past and present from their perspective.

Led by Richard Young and our Planning Committee, we are hoping to cap the anniversary with a new information board at the railway station, for which we have received civic funding from the Council. We also are working with the Council to create what we hope will be an attractive enhancement to the town centre with a town sign with a difference, in that it will be embedded into the paving.

Our Awards evening this year took a slight detour with an enjoyably idiosyncratic photographic odyssey through the town by Tony McSweeney, and we were much encouraged by the warm tributes paid by Bamber Gascoigne and the Mayor.

The summer party was somewhat dampened by the rain but the welcome extended to us by the Van Dedems at Trumpeters House again made for a splendid celebration in their wonderful gardens. Our thanks also to Andrew Howard-Smith, our organiser.

I must pay tribute to the work of our committees and all the individuals involved, including our Treasurer and Secretary. They report separately on their various activities. The town centre improvement scheme has taken up much time and doubtless the planned expansion of Heathrow will be a major issue for us in 2008. Janice Kay continues to organise our lecture programme with great skill and we are grateful to all those who give up their time to entertain and inform us. Paul Velluet and Charles Keggen continue with our summer walks programme, which I think demonstrates what a lively and comprehensive range of activities the Society provides for its members. Our thanks as usual to all those who arrange the distribution of our quarterly magazine which is a lifeline to many members who cannot attend our meetings or engage in our activities.

Inevitably, some members of our committee wish to stand down after many years of outstanding service. Peter Locke, the backbone of our Planning Committee for so many years, has said this will be his last year, while our membership secretary Sylvia Ruggier also wishes to stand down. We need replacements. Lord Attenborough called movingly for new members to help us reach the 1000 mark, which we are now closing on. We need a few of you to step up to the committee. Please let me know if you think you can help. Your community needs you!

ALAN SAUNDERS

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ON THE WORK OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2007

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 2007.

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP in the year increased by 25 to 951 and there are also 45 Honorary Members. We hope that with an extra effort we can raise the membership to one thousand.

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

In the year under review there were four **public meetings** in the Vestry Hall and one held jointly with the River Thames Society in the Richmond Canoe Club. The year began with the **Annual Review and Awards** followed as usual by Wine and Cheese, and ended with a **Special Jubilee Celebration** in the Parish Church.

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

In spite of the wet summer weather the seven Wednesday evening **Heritage Walks**, organised and led by Paul Velluet and Charles Keggen, proved as popular as ever in this, their 27th year, and raised £86 for the Society's Trees and Landscaping Fund.

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

LANDSCAPING AND RIVERSIDE

Much of the committee's focus during the year has continued to be directed to the proposed renovation of the Terrace Gardens, through its representation on the Terrace Gardens Advisory Committee. The Council made a new appointment in the summer, Portia Baker, as officer to oversee this work, reporting to David Allister, who is currently Acting Head of Parks & Open Spaces. The programme of work has now been announced, which will take place during the next 18 months, consisting principally of restoring the paths and creating a step free route around the gardens, providing access to the top of Richmond Hill.

The steps taken by the Society and others, to seek an end to parking on Petersham Meadows by customers of Petersham Nurseries, have had a successful outcome, with only a small area now being used for the turning of vehicles, and it is planned that this area be further reduced in the new year. The Society has two nominated trustees on the board of the Petersham Trust, which has during the year completed the renovation of the old milking parlour and erected a timber-framed barn to provide shelter for the cattle on the Petersham Meadows.

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 in the last two years, 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. Issues that were raised with the Council during the year include work around the plane tree at Gaucho's restaurant by the towpath, the exposure of tree roots during the resurfacing of the walk between Nightingale Lane and the Star & Garter, and ongoing communication regarding the lime trees in Waterloo Place, where the brick surrounds have disintegrated. Members wishing to draw the Council's attention to problems such as these can access their Street Scene Fault Reporting Form on the Council's website at richmond.gov.uk/parksand_open_spaces.

The Council's plans to install steps in the Gothic Garden, one of the pocket gardens linking the Petersham Road to the towpath, were put on hold during the summer, owing to the unsafe condition of the retaining wall. The Society is in communication with the Council in order to encourage the installation of steps, both to provide a way out from the towpath at high tide and to discourage squatters.

TOWN CENTRE, LICENSING AND RELATED ISSUES

The Society has been no less active than in previous years in seeking a reduction in anti-social behaviour (asb) in the town. The Erskine Report 2007 commissioned by the Council was issued in May and we have made good use of the results as we did with the 2005 Report. The 2007 Report went beyond measuring asb in the town centre and added The Green and public drinking. Evidence on the latter was used to support the introduction of a Controlled Drinking Zone (CDZ) in the town in July following discussions we initiated at the end of 2006. While the Erskine 2007 Report indicated a small reduction in asb since 2005, as yet there is no definite downward trend and it is too early to measure the impact of the CDZ.

The Erskine evidence has been used to support extension of the Cumulative Impact Policy from pubs and bars to all premises supplying alcohol and to any variation in hours. Subject to final approval by the Council in late November, the new Licensing Policy will come into effect in early 2008. The presumption is refusal of new licences or variations unless an applicant can demonstrate there will be no adverse cumulative impact. This is a position the Society welcomes and has sought over the past 8 years; it now should enable us to focus on asb reduction instead of capacity growth. We contributed to the consultation and most importantly the licensing policy has been changed to recognise the need to reduce alcohol related asb and not just to contain it.

Discussions are underway with the Council and Police on reducing asb and alcohol abuse. As ever, it is the cumulative effect of relatively trivial asb incidents (we estimate some 45,000 a year) that erode peoples' quality of life and deter visitors from the town in the evening. Hopefully next year we shall be able to report on progress.

Unfortunately a proposal by the Society and others for additional CCTV coverage at asb hot spots in the town was refused by the Council, who gave priority to other sites.

We have been active, particularly in the last couple of months, in resisting new alcohol licences and extension of hours - twelve applications over the year. We have been partially successful and even when applications have been granted we have usually been able to ensure conditions are attached to reduce the risks. Off-sales are a particular problem for the town and we have been partially successful in resisting further capacity. Retailers of all kinds seem to want to sell alcohol, eg Boots and Dickens and Jones, and others seek to introduce new bar concepts. A licence at a new M&S store at the station is of particular concern given the area is an asb hot spot and the point of entry for visitors who go on to drink to excess. However, there is some comfort that the licence granted requires security guards and alcohol to be sold only with food purchases. Applicants generally seek licences with maximum flexibility and without conditions but often the risks to the community are high unless restrictions are added. While residents seem no less concerned with the issue of alcohol related asb, the concern has not been translated into representation at hearings, which has been disappointing this past year. Without active involvement by residents licences have to be granted by law.

The year has also included extensive work in conjunction with the planning committee on the proposed town centre enhancement scheme which will be of benefit but raises important issues regarding traffic congestion if George Street were to be narrowed to a single lane.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The infrastructure committee has been under strength this year and so has focussed on the biggest issue facing Richmond – the consultation on Heathrow expansion. A working group has been set up to develop arguments, publicise the issues, and get as many individuals and organisations as possible to respond to the consultation. This is made up of representatives from the Society, Friends of Richmond Green, Heathrow Associates (who are looking at the economic arguments) and the Council. With the consultation recently issued, the working group will issue its initial publicity in mid-December.

The other main infrastructure issue in Richmond this year has been the proposed Town Centre improvements, where we have worked with the society's Planning Committee and the Friends of Richmond Green to shape and improve the scheme. Transport for London has also proposed changes at Sheen Road and on the Lower Mortlake Road at Pagoda Avenue, and we have responded to the latter. Following these consultations, we plan to press Transport for London for improved availability of consultation materials for their smaller projects, and a more collaborative approach to all their projects.

PLANNING

During the last 12 months the Society's Planning Committee has held 11 main meetings. 93 Planning Applications have been reviewed, comments on 45 of which have been submitted to the Council. In addition we have held a number of "pre-Application" meetings with architects on specific schemes, most which are yet to go forward to the Council for consideration, at which stage we will be making our formal comments known on the proposals concerned. We have also met Council officers to discuss various issues of planning and design affecting the Town.

We have therefore continued to do our best to monitor the numerous changes that have been proposed within the Town in the light of the constant demand for development of one sort or another.

Amongst our more miscellaneous activities, we brought the May Fair exhibition boards up-to-date for 2007 - always a light-hearted but hard-working task involving much photography scripting and text layout prior to the assembly of the boards themselves - and the Committee also organised the annual Awards assessment and the visual presentation for the Awards' evening in October.

2007 has been a year in which the Council's proposed changes and improvements to the Town Centre have been the subject of considerable scrutiny by the Society. Most of the initial ideas proposed by the Society, which focussed on improving facilities for pedestrians, a speed limit of 20mph and enhanced street scene details including paving and signs, have been incorporated in the Council's ultimate proposals. To that extent and with work now underway, we can look forward to a much improved and consistent appearance within the town and we hope that work will be completed by the end of next year. Notwithstanding this optimism, concerns remain about the details for George Street, particularly the proposed pavement projections which we believe would be likely to precipitate congestion and increase pollution. We are therefore continuing to press both the Council and TfL to abandon this aspect of the work.

The Society exists to foster, amongst other things, the protection and enhancement of the town and the promotion of good design. We therefore consider carefully our representation on specific applications at the Council's Planning Committee meetings. Our main concern is for the town as a whole and it is invariably the case that representations from locally affected residents will be more appropriate. However there are instances where the Society considers the issues to be important enough to warrant attendance and presentation. Such a case in point is the site in Paradise Road, currently known as Premier House and Suffield House, where the Society made a successful case for the refusal of the current proposals. This is an extremely important site and we must now hope that revised proposals will be submitted which will provide the opportunity for a building that will make a significant improvement in the streetscape of both Paradise Road and Halford Road.

The Planning committee would welcome a fresh intake of new blood. The protection and enhancement of the built environment in Richmond is a continuing challenge and the Council very much takes note of our opinions and comments. Members who feel that they have the enthusiasm and interest, and a modest amount of time available, to participate in the work of the Society are earnestly invited to join the Committee.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Income for the year was £12,613. This is £3,492 more than last year primarily as a result of a £3,000 grant from the Thames Community Foundation towards a project the Society is working on to erect an information board at Richmond Station. 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 £7,744. This is £1,824 above last year principally as a result of £674 of expenditure on the Society's project on the Cropley memorial at St Mary Magdalene and expenditure of £410 on reprinting some of the Society's Richmond walks information leaflets.

Overall the Society recorded a surplus for the year of £4,869 (2005/06: £3,201) which was added to reserves. The main reasons for the higher surplus was the receipt of the grant from the Thames Community Foundation which will be spent in 2008.

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.

STATEMENT OF 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

Pat Spaight
Secretary

12 November 2007

The Richmond Society

**Statement of financial activities
for the year ended 30 September 2007**

	2007	2006
	£	£
Incoming resources		
<i>From generated funds</i>		
Subscription income	3,912	3,878
Donations	1,002	1,064
Grants	3,000	-
Events	2,568	2,473
Interest income	1,742	1,339
<i>From charitable activities</i>		
Publications	303	241
Walks	86	126
Total incoming resources	<u>12,613</u>	<u>9,121</u>
Resources expended		
<i>Cost of generating funds</i>		
Events	2,647	2,128
Other fund-raising costs	-	-
<i>Cost of charitable activities</i>		
Trees & landscaping	-	-
Cropley memorial project	674	-
Newsletters	1,760	1,475
Public meetings	287	305
Subscriptions	209	225
Printing, reports & postage	721	352
Other running costs	1,334	1,325
Governance costs	112	110
Total resources expended	<u>7,744</u>	<u>5,920</u>
Net incoming resources before transfers	<u>4,869</u>	<u>3,201</u>
Transfers between funds	-	-
Net movement of funds for the year	<u>4,869</u>	<u>3,201</u>
Opening fund balances	<u>21,237</u>	<u>18,036</u>
Closing fund balances	<u>26,106</u>	<u>21,237</u>

Balance sheet at 30 September 2007

	2007	2006
	£	£
Fixed assets		
Display stands & projector	395	463
Current assets		
Stock of awards plaques	784	240
Debtors & prepayments	1,131	955
Deposit account	36,225	31,290
Cash at bank and in hand	-	776
	<u>38,140</u>	<u>33,261</u>
Current liabilities: amounts falling due within 1 year		
Creditors & accruals	10,113	9,887
Deferred income from life subscriptions	404	424
	<u>10,517</u>	<u>10,311</u>
Net current assets	27,623	22,950
Total assets less current liabilities	<u>28,018</u>	<u>23,413</u>
Liabilities and charges due after more than one year		
Deferred income from life subscriptions	1,912	2,176
Net assets	<u>26,106</u>	<u>21,237</u>
Funds		
General	18,918	17,778
Project	3,000	-
Landscaping & Trees	4,188	3,459
	<u>26,106</u>	<u>21,237</u>

Approved by the Executive Committee on 12 November 2007

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 12 November 2007 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.

A Saunders (Chair)