



THE RICHMOND SOCIETY

REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2008

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
Jacyntha Crawley *co-opted Feb 08* John Govett Andrew Howard-Smith *co-opted 2005* Janice Kay
Peter Locke Neil Maybin Sylvia Ruggier [*to Feb 08*] David Shaw Peter Willan Richard Young
Honorary Reporting Accountant Geoffrey Hyde

COMMITTEES

PLANNING Richard Young *Chairman*, Janet Locke, Peter Locke, Tony McSweeney, Charles Pineles,
Claire Tylee, Derek Robinson, Chris Stutz and Robin Wade
COMMUNICATIONS Jacyntha Crawley, Andrew Howard-Smith, Janice Kay, Patricia Spaight
INFRASTRUCTURE Neil Maybin
TOWN CENTRE, LICENSING & RELATED ISSUES Peter Willan
LANDSCAPING & RIVERSIDE John Govett *Chairman*, Patrick Doolan, Carol Ward

Newsletter Volunteers and Neighbourhood Area Distributors

Co-ordinator: Judith Becker

Stuffing Party host: Ginny Curry

Mr & Mrs F Barnes, Sheila Bertram, Ena Black, Miss J Crawley, George Darby, Jani Denison, Heather Edgar, Debbie Gooday, Edith Griffiths, Adam Harrison, Oliver Hayward, Bella Hobson, Jenny Hodder, Janet Jennings, Susie Judge, Doreen King, Mr R Knight, Max Lancaster, Michael Loader, Clive Long, Pat Maynard, Liliane Palmer, Jane Parkinson, Violet Peacock, Bidy Petersen, Rebecca Phelps, Mrs Poole, Mrs Rivett-Carnac, Derek Robinson, Sylvia Ruggier, Marion Shoosmith, Roberta Turner, Ann Twinn, Vivienne van Straubensee, Patricia Urch, Liz Velluet, Margaret Walsh, Fenella Wardon, Jan Warner, 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

A year ago I was able to report on the activities of the Society in our 50th year and the celebrations we enjoyed during the year. Two of the projects we worked on, the station sign and the town centre sign, have been subject to the usual delays and have had to be carried forward, to be delivered hopefully in 2009. We may now be a mature amenity society but there has been no sign of complacency and our various committees have been very busy as the Committee Chairs report on the following pages.

The biggest workload has been shared by those active in the campaign against Heathrow expansions and the ending of runway alternation, and I would like to pay tribute to Neil Maybin, Peter Willan and Ian Bruce who have been so committed to the campaign to protect Richmond. Richard Young and his Planning Committee as ever have undertaken a heavy workload of vetting planning applications and assessing the town centre improvement scheme. Peter Willan continues his strenuous efforts to rein in anti-social behaviour in the town centre, working with the Council and the Police. John Govett and his Landscaping team have been actively involved in the successful renovation scheme for the Terrace Gardens.

These activities represent the campaigning and scrutinising part of our remit but of course we also have an active educational and entertainment side for our members. Janice Kay has produced another excellent set of Society lectures and a good programme is booked for the coming year. Paul Velluet and Charles Keggen continue with our Summer Walks, and next year will see their 30th anniversary, a remarkable achievement. Our summer party, organised as are all our social events, by Andrew Howard-Smith, was a great success in good weather in the garden of Queensberry House. The review of the last thirty odd years of the Society's Awards by Richard Young at the Annual Awards evening was a fascinating reminder of times past and present, culminating in the presentations to the winners.

Richard is the first of several officers of the Society to step down this year, as I flagged in the Quarterly Newsletter. He has been an outstanding Chair of the Planning Committee and put in many extra hours in preparing for the May Fair exhibition as well as the Awards ceremony, which he conducts with aplomb. The redoubtable team of Peter and Janet Locke are also retiring from the Planning committee and Peter also from the Executive, where Janet also sat for many years. They have been the engine room of the Planning Committee, which Peter also chaired for so many years that it will be hard to imagine life without them. The same could be said for Sylvia Ruggier who earlier in the year retired from the role of Membership Secretary after serving the Society for over twenty years in a variety of capacities, always with charm and efficiency. We were very grateful to Jacyntha Crawley for volunteering to take over from Sylvia. Finally, a special thank you Geoff and Freda Hyde who are also stepping down from honourable service behind the bar at our parties over many years.

The Society faces new challenges going forward, not least in replacing these stalwarts, and we have a busy schedule ahead of us. We try to remain active and engaged as well as offering an enjoyable programme of activities for members. In all of this, I am grateful for the support of the Executive and those who sit on our committees, together with those of you who help in distributing the Quarterly Newsletter, our grass roots. Above all, I would like to thank our Secretary, Pat Spaight, who works so hard for the Society, producing the Newsletter and posters for our events, as well as keeping me and the Executive Committee up to the mark.

ALAN SAUNDERS

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ON THE WORK OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2008

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 2008.

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

In the year under review there were six **public meetings** in the Vestry Hall: talks on the restoration of Kew Palace, the risk of Flooding in the Thames, Hidden Richmond, the Rambert Ballet School, and two Forum meetings. There was also a meeting on Climate Change held jointly with the Kew Society at St Johns Church. The year began with the **Annual Review and Awards** followed as usual by a Wine and Cheese party. Other social events were the customary **Christmas Party** after the AGM, the **Summer Party** in Queensberry House garden, and a **Pub Lunch** in March at the *Rose of York*. The Society participated as usual in the **May Fair** on Richmond Green.

This was the 29th year of the Wednesday evening **Heritage Walks**, organised and led by Paul Velluet with the help of Charles Keggen, and the seven walks attracted 145 walkers who donated £133 to the Society's Trees and Landscaping Fund.

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

TOWN CENTRE, LICENSING AND RELATED ISSUES

Peter Willan

Licensing The Society has continued to monitor licence applications and anti-social behaviour in the town. There was a deluge of applications at the end of calendar 2007, possibly to seek variations before the Cumulative Impact Policy changed at the beginning of 2008 to include all premises supplying alcohol and any variation in hours. Since then thankfully there have been few applications. However, the problems of anti-social behaviour persist and the cost of alcohol abuse rises. The Government has belatedly recognised the alcohol problems arising from the Licensing Act 2003 and is considering restrictions on Happy Hours. Off-sales followed by excess consumption in the town's open spaces and under-age consumption are the main problems. The Society continues to work with the Council and police in tackling the issues so that the town is a place for visitors and residents to enjoy. During the year the Government proposed a change to licensing that introduces "minor variations" that streamline the administration; the Society believes the process could mean that some adverse changes are allowed without residents having an opportunity to object and we raised our concerns during consultation.

Town Centre Scheme The year included extensive work in conjunction with the Society's planning committee on the proposed town centre enhancement scheme which improves the visual appearance but we believe will add to congestion, pollution and traffic displacement by narrowing George Street to a single lane at two locations.

Heathrow expansion and loss of runway alternation Extensive work was also carried out with colleagues in opposing the Heathrow proposals through the Richmond Heathrow Campaign.

PLANNING

Richard Young

The last 12 months have seen the Society's Planning Committee continuing its wide range of activities. During this period the Committee has held 12 meetings at which some 70 Planning Applications have been reviewed and comments have been submitted to the Council on over 50 of them. We have also held "pre-Application" meetings with architects on specific schemes, prior to making our comments to the Council on the formally submitted proposals. Meetings have been held with Council officers to discuss various issues of planning and design affecting the town.

The Committee, on behalf of the Society, has continued to monitor significant developments within the town as proposals for the development of sites, individual properties and changes to existing buildings and retail premises have continued throughout the year. Our work has included commenting on a number of Consultation Papers, including the Council's draft planning guidelines for the future of the Royal Star and Garter Home sites on Richmond Hill.

The production of the May Fair exhibition boards was again its usual light-hearted, hard-working task, involving photography, writing, editing and text layout. The Committee also organised the annual Awards assessment and the Annual Review presentation for the Awards evening in October.

2008 has seen the commencement of the Council's work on the changes and improvements to the Town Centre which is now destined to be completed in late 2009. Although there has been inevitable disruption, the much needed improvements to the appearance of the town are already evident. 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 proposals. The Committee, together with The Friends of Richmond Green, has continued to review the details of the work, including paving and lighting and the proposed pavement projections in George Street which particularly we still believe would be likely to precipitate congestion and increase pollution. We commissioned a report on the likely pattern of pedestrian movement in George Street and have continued to press both the Council and TfL to abandon this aspect of the work.

Good progress has been made on the Society's two sign projects for the Town Centre. A pavement sign illustrating the key historical aspects of Richmond and commemorating the Society's 50th anniversary has now been approved by the Council and is due for installation in Lower George Street in the spring of 2009. Proposals for an Information Board by the Station are also going through the approval process and the Board is planned to be installed in the new Station forecourt in the late summer of 2009.

The Society exists to foster, amongst other things, the enhancement and protection 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 sites which are visibly in the public realm. It is invariably the case that representations on specific projects from locally affected residents will be more appropriate to which the Society can usually play a complementary and supportive role.

The Planning Committee is always on the look out for new recruits. This year we have been fortunate to welcome two new Members, Dr Claire Tylee and Charles Pineles who, together with Chris Stutz who joined us last year, are already playing an important part in the Committee's work. The protection and enhancement of the built environment in Richmond is a continuing challenge and the Council certainly takes note of our opinions and comments. With the retirement of Janet and Peter Locke and Richard Young at the end of this year, Members particularly with Architecture or Planning experience and 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.

LANDSCAPING AND RIVERSIDE

John Govett

As in the previous year the principal focus of the committee this year has been on the renovation of the Terrace Gardens which, under the supervision of Portia Baker, the Council's Landscape Architect, is now nearly complete. A number of Richmond Society members are represented on the Terrace Gardens Advisory Committee, which was set up by the Council to give input on a wide range of issues arising during the renovation process. While there has not always been complete agreement on some of the details of the renovation, it is felt that the overall quality of the work has been to a high standard, and it is good that the process has not necessitated the closure of the gardens to the public. The main outstanding tasks are the introduction of informative but not too obtrusive signage, and a number of bio-diversity features.

The Society continues to be represented on the Petersham Trust by two member trustees, Bernard Marder and John Govett. The Society funded the cost of planting three trees on the Petersham Meadows from its tree fund during the year. It is hoped that the long planned transfer to the National Trust of responsibility for maintaining the meadows may take place in 2009.

The Society was consulted during the year by Arcadia on the restoration of Riverdale Garden, one of the public pocket gardens along the towpath. It was agreed, after consultation with Gavin Renton, that it was appropriate to remove the Renton shelter which stood in this garden, and replace it with open seating, and to introduce a step-free path linking the towpath to the Petersham Road.

The committee has pursued with the Council's Tree Department specific problems raised by members relating to trees within the town. If members are concerned about the condition of particular trees in Richmond they are encouraged to draw this to the attention of this department at trees@richmond.gov.uk and if they continue to be concerned, to contact either John Govett: jgovett@blueyonder.co.uk or the Society: secretary@richmondsociety.co.uk

INFRASTRUCTURE

Neil Maybin

Over the past year the biggest infrastructure issue has been the threat of Heathrow expansion. To address this the Society joined forces at the end of 2007 with the Friends of Richmond Green to form the Richmond Heathrow Campaign. This now also includes representation from the Kew Society and the members are Neil Maybin, Ian Bruce, Michael Glazebrook, Peter Griffiths, Karineh Grigorian, Gareth Harper and Peter Willan.

The aim of the Richmond Heathrow Campaign is twofold: to encourage visible public opposition to the proposals for Heathrow expansion, and to mobilise individuals and organisations in our area who in turn may be able to influence the Government's decisions on Heathrow.

In January we organised Richmond's public meeting attended by around 500 people, following the Department for Transport's exhibition of the Heathrow expansion proposals. We wrote and publicised a guide to the Government's questionnaire, helping people to understand and respond to a confusing document and so contributing to the more than 65,000 responses submitted. And in May we helped to publicise the "Make a NOise" rally in Sipson, organising four coaches to the event in conjunction with the Kew Society.

We have lobbied business leaders, met with the proposer of one of the alternative rail schemes, and reviewed with our MEP the Government's proposed request for derogation from EU air quality limits. We have also worked closely with Susan Kramer MP, the Council and HACAN to make sure the local response is fully coordinated.

Over the past year, opposition to Heathrow expansion has become widespread, with the national press leading the way. Both opposition parties, many Labour MPs, and perhaps even some cabinet ministers oppose expansion. But even if the Third Runway does not go ahead, mixed mode might. This would result in aircraft noise all day, every day, over Richmond town. The Richmond Heathrow Campaign therefore envisages an equally busy year in 2009.

Elsewhere, we have lobbied Richmond Council extensively about the Richmond Town Centre redesign, and in particular proposals for loading bays and pavement protrusions in George Street. And we have made submissions to TfL and worked with Richmond Council and local councillors on plans for more restricted stopping near the shops on Sheen Road near Alton Road and also those on Lower Mortlake Road near Pagoda Avenue. While the free flow of traffic – particularly buses – is desirable, this has to be balanced with the viability of local shops and the communities they serve.

FUTURE PLANS

The Society expects to continue with its existing programme of activities. It is hoped to finalise two special projects, a Town Sign and an Information Board at Richmond Station.

PUBLIC BENEFIT STATEMENT

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit, 'Charities and Public Benefit'.

The Society's charitable purposes are enshrined in its objective to make Richmond a better place to live, work in and visit. The trustees ensure that this objective is carried out for the benefit of the public in general whether or not they are members of the Society.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

- Income for the year was £11,747. This is £866 less than last year which benefited from a £3,000 grant. Excluding the effect of the grant, income was up this year by £2,134. This was primarily due to higher donations (£1,109) and higher income from a highly successful events programme (£574) 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 £7,845, at a comparable level to last year, although there were some modest increases and decreases in the various categories of costs.
- Overall the Society recorded a surplus for the year of £3,902 (2006/07: £4,869) 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 specially tailored to the needs of charities.

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

25 November 2008

The Richmond Society

Statement of financial activities for the year ended 30 September 2008

	2008	2007
	£	£
Incoming resources		
<i>From generated funds</i>		
Subscription income	3,964	3,912
Donations	2,111	1,002
Grants	-	3,000
Events	3,142	2,568
Interest income	2,153	1,742
<i>From charitable activities</i>		
Publications	215	303
Walks & meetings	162	86
Total incoming resources	11,747	12,613
Resources expended		
<i>Cost of generating funds</i>		
Events	2,757	2,647
Other fund-raising costs	-	-
<i>Cost of charitable activities</i>		
Trees & landscaping	630	-
Cropley memorial project	-	674
Newsletters	2,049	1,760
Public meetings	303	287
Subscriptions	251	209
Printing, reports & postage	557	721
Other running costs	1,186	1,334
Governance costs	112	112
Total resources expended	7,845	7,744
Net incoming resources before transfers	3,902	4,869
Transfers between funds	-	-
Net movement of funds for the year	3,902	4,869
Opening fund balances	26,106	21,237
Closing fund balances	30,008	26,106

Balance sheet at 30 September 2008

	2008	2007
	£	£
Fixed assets		
Display stands & projector	332	395
Current assets		
Stock of awards plaques	784	784
Debtors & prepayments	929	1,131
Deposit account	39,678	36,225
Cash at bank and in hand	560	-
	41,951	38,140
Current liabilities: amounts falling due within 1 year		
Creditors & accruals	10,293	10,113
Deferred income from life subscriptions	349	404
	10,642	10,517
Net current assets	31,309	27,623
Total assets less current liabilities	31,641	28,018
Liabilities and charges due after more than one year		
Deferred income from life subscriptions	1,633	1,912
Net assets	30,008	26,106
Funds		
General	22,052	18,918
Project	3,628	3,000
Landscaping & Trees	4,328	4,188
	30,008	26,106
Approved by the Executive Committee on 25 November 2008		
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 25 November 2008 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 or can be downloaded from the Society's website.

A Saunders (Chair)