



THE RICHMOND SOCIETY

REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2009

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 [*to June*] : John Govett : Karineh Grigorian [*co-opted July*] : Andrew Howard-Smith
Janice Kay : Neil Maybin : Charles Pineles [*co-opted November*] : David Shaw : Peter Willan : Richard Young
Honorary Reporting Accountant Geoffrey Hyde

COMMITTEES

PLANNING Charles Pineles *Chairman*, Nuggy Lianos [*from September*], Tony McSweeney, Claire Tylee [*to July*], Derek Robinson, Chris Stutz, Robin Wade and Richard Young
COMMUNICATIONS Karineh Grigorian, 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

Sheila Bertram, Ena Black, Miss J Crawley, Janny Denison, Heather Edgar, Debbie Gooday, Edith Griffiths, Adam Harrison, Bella Hobson, Janet Jennings, Susie Judge, Doreen King, Ron Knight, Clive Long, Pat Maynard, Iain Mulligan, Liliane Palmer, Jane Parkinson, Biddy Petersen, Rebecca Phelps, Mary-Rose Rivett-Carnac, Derek Robinson, Marion Shoosmith, Roberta Turner, Ann Twinn, Vivienne van Straubenzee, Patricia Urch, Liz Velluet, Margaret Walsh, Fenella Warden, Jan Warner, Janet Young

MEMBERSHIP or AFFILIATION of the SOCIETY to OTHER BODIES

The Environment Trust for Richmond upon Thames,
The London Forum of Amenity & Civic Societies,
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

As Richmond's local amenity society we see one of our key roles to be fighting on residents' behalf when we see the quality of life in the town coming under threat. We have done this for decades on planning matters and in recent years have taken up the cudgels on licensing extensions and the associated problems of anti-social behaviour. No greater threat exists of course than that of Heathrow expansion and we have campaigned vigorously against it.

The government announced as long ago as January that it supported a third runway and sixth terminal at Heathrow although it withdrew support for a move to mixed mode, allowing us to benefit from continuation of runway alternation. A change of government may change all this but we continue to lobby against expansion, focussing on environmental impact and in particular on noise. I am grateful to **Neil Maybin**, **Peter Willan** and others for their continuing involvement. Peter also maintains his heroic efforts to counter the growing problem of anti-social behaviour and to challenge new licensing applications. He and **Richard Young** have continued to follow closely the Town Centre improvement programme and after much lobbying have persuaded the Council to abandon the idea of narrowing George Street with traffic protrusions.

We have been very fortunate as a committee to welcome **Charles Pineles** as the new chair of the Planning Committee. Charles has thrown himself into the role with great gusto and rose to the challenge of presenting his first Awards ceremony in October with aplomb. I am grateful to all the members of the Planning Committee who work very hard on the community's behalf to monitor new developments. Unfortunately, we have had to abandon the idea of an information board at the station but we proceed with the planned town centre sign, which though delayed we hope to unveil in the spring.

Sadly, we say farewell and thank you to **John Govett** who now steps down after five years as chair of our Riverside and Landscaping committee, though happily he will stay on the committee. We are delighted to welcome **Carol Ward** as the new committee head and Carol has already proved her mettle by stepping in at short notice at our September Forum meeting. John has been an exemplary member of the Committee and among the legacies he hopes to leave behind is our commitment to seeing through the *To the River* project, a web-based photographic essay of the river at Richmond and the buildings along its bank. It was a happy outcome that our brass plaque at the Awards ceremony went to the much admired Terrace Gardens, which we have championed through our Landscaping Committee.

We welcome also a new Membership Secretary, **Karineh Grigorian**, who took over from Jacyntha Crawley during the year and Karineh is already well up to speed. Perhaps in this respect I could acknowledge the work that **Neil Maybin** does behind the scenes in keeping our website up to date as well as lending general IT support together with all his campaigning work for the Society. Our Treasurer, **Andrew Coleman**, continues to keep our finances healthy and I am most grateful to **David Shaw** for chairing the AGM this year in my absence. And of course, it gives me considerable pleasure to record the great debt of gratitude we all feel to **Pat Spaight**, our Secretary, for keeping the whole show on the road and maintaining the very high standard of our Quarterly newsletter.

On the social front, **Janice Kay** produced another excellent series of lectures and **Andrew Howard-Smith** as ever operated skilfully behind the scenes to make sure our Summer party and functions such as the AGM are as enjoyable as ever. Trumpeter's House is the most delightful of venues and we thank the Van Dedems for their hospitality.

Finally, I cannot conclude without paying proper tribute to **Paul Velluet** and **Charles Keggan** for rounding off another series of summer walks, unbelievably their 30th anniversary. The walks were especially well attended this year and a wonderful advertisement for our activities as well as fulfilling one of our objectives, namely to encourage an active interest in Richmond. To these and all the volunteers who help in various capacities, many thanks, we cannot do without you.

ALAN SAUNDERS

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ON THE WORK OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2009

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 2009.

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

In the year under review there were six **public meetings** in the Vestry Hall: talks on the Richmond Theatre and the Matcham Society, the National Archives, the Richmond & Twickenham Times, Eels in the Thames, and two Forum meetings. There was also a meeting on Living Buildings held jointly with the Kew Society in the Jodrell Theatre at Kew. 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 Trumpeters House garden, and a **Pub Lunch** in March at the *Lass of Richmond Hill*. The Society participated as usual in the **May Fair** on Richmond Green.

This was the 30th year of the Wednesday evening **Heritage Walks**, organised and led by Paul Velluet with the help of Charles Keggen. The Tudor Anniversary Walk, arranged in cooperation with the Museum of Richmond, was especially popular, attracting 60 walkers, and altogether 251 took part in the seven walks, donating more than £231 to the Society's Trees and Landscaping Fund.

MEMBERSHIP records were transferred to a new computer program during the year and email addresses are now being recorded. Total membership at the year-end was 936.

LANDSCAPING AND RIVERSIDE John Govett

Two of the main focuses of this committee, reported on last year, were on projects successfully completed in 2009; the beautifully restored Terrace Gardens were formally opened by Prince Edward in July, and the attractive new layout of the Riverdale Gardens by the Thames towpath was completed in the spring. The important improvement to both these gardens was recognised by the Society at its annual awards ceremony in October. This committee has been represented at discussions currently taking place, on the initiative of the Council, to form a friends group for the Terrace Gardens.

It had been hoped that 2009 would finally see the transfer of the lease of the Petersham Meadows from the Petersham Trust to the National Trust (the Society is represented on the Petersham Trust by two nominated trustees – Bernard Marder and John Govett). In the event various legal details are still being finalised, but the transfer should occur early in the new year.

Members are reminded that, if they are concerned about the condition of trees in the town, they are encouraged to draw this to the attention of the Council's Tree Department at trees@richmond.gov.uk. If they continue to be concerned, one of the Society's Landscaping & Riverside committee will be pleased to try to help.

Issues that are currently being pursued by this committee with the Council include seeking restoration of the paving on the towpath below the Old Town Hall, repair of the Gothic pocket garden by the Thames and replacement of the broken brick surrounds to the trees in Waterloo Place. Achieving progress on these issues is not proving easy.

After five years chairing this committee John Govett is handing over the chair to Carol Ward immediately following the AGM, and is standing down from the Executive committee, but will remain a member of the Landscaping & Riverside committee.

TOWN CENTRE, LICENSING AND RELATED ISSUES

Peter Willan

Licensing The Society has continued to monitor and respond to licence applications and anti-social behaviour in the town. We were relieved that in June the Council re-affirmed continuation of the Cumulative Impact Policy and its support for the Controlled Drinking Zone. A Third observational study of the town's evening economy was undertaken in April (previously 2005 and 2007) and showed that while there were some encouraging signs there is still a large amount of anti-social behaviour, particularly in the town's streets and open spaces.

The Society reviewed and in most cases opposed 11 licence applications during the year, although in some cases the purpose was to seek conditions rather than outright refusal. An appeal to the magistrates by the bar at 8 Hill Rise was successfully defended in conjunction with the Council. The Society are supportive of use of Bridge House Gardens by Richmond Bridge as an outdoor cafe but were concerned at the granting of an alcohol licence which risks extending the alcohol hot spot that exists north of the bridge to an area past the natural spatial containment afforded by the bridge. The idea of a public open space is to give free access but this tends to conflict with the alcohol licence which control's peoples use. On balance, the Society was successful in holding the line on no more expansion of alcohol premises in the town, no extension of hours and no additional outdoor music at premises. However, applications continue to roll in and the process of reviewing applications, discussing issues with local residents who might have concerns and presenting detailed cases in writing and at hearings proves a heavy burden on the limited resources of the Society. Should the Tories form the next government they have pledged to overhaul the Licensing Act 2003, hopefully to better protect residents. One of the biggest risks for residents is the Temporary Event Notice over which neither they nor the Council have any say. One particular concern is under-age consumption of alcohol; Richmond borough reportedly has the highest level of under-age drinking in London.

A Police Liaison Group was introduced in the year with involvement of the Society and other societies. One of its current priorities is anti-social behaviour but it is too early to say what the group will achieve.

The Society was consulted on the Council's tri-annual review of the Gambling Act 2005 Policy, and we supported the Council's resolution of "No Casino in the borough". Recommendations on the evening economy were made through the planning committee as part of the Society's response to consultation on the Local Development Framework, which is being prepared to replace the Unitary Development Plan for the borough.

Town Centre Scheme The year saw the successful conclusion of over two years hard work and discussions with the Council in conjunction with Richard Young of the planning committee and Friends of Richmond Green on the Council's proposal for the narrowing of George Street to a single lane by introducing two pavement protrusions. The Council announced they had abandoned the projections.

PLANNING

Charles Pineles

It has been a singularly busy year. Beginning with the retirement of Peter and Janet Locke, whose contribution to the committee and to the Town over so many years it is difficult to over-estimate. Then, in December 2008 Richard Young stood down as chairman after four years careful and highly professional leadership. Fortunately he remains on the committee where his experience and opinions continue to make a major and valued contribution to debates. Latterly we were fortunate to enlist the membership to the committee of Nuggy Lianos, founding partner in The Quad Partnership architectural practice. An addition which has already proved to lend significant strength and depth to the committee's deliberations.

The year was not without its significant disappointments. Beginning with the loss, at Appeal, of the development at 10 Kings' Road, behind Kingsbury House, and continuing with The Knoll, an over-development if ever there was one and proof that a well advised client/architect combine can so easily drive a coach and horses through all the theoretical powers of enforcement held by the local authority.

Again, the decision, by the Council Planning Committee chairman's casting vote, to demolish a high-grade inter-war dwelling in good condition at 22 Marchmont Road, and replace it with a construction, of inevitably inferior quality but representing three dwellings, leaves a strong taste of loss to the community.

Most recently we have heard of permission granted to demolish the western part of the three buildings of Townscape Merit, at Paton's Engineering, 45 the Vineyard and replace it with a flat roofed, 1970s style four storey office block. In a Conservation Area crying out for residential use on a building of which the three parts make up an indivisible whole one wonders at what cost the Council is currently determined to uphold its policy of seeking to retain employment in the town, regardless of the keenly expressed desires of local residents and the demands of the market.

The committee has always sought to actively encourage good modern architecture but on the basis of quality. Quality of design, quality of build. And it is this central tenet which drives decisions. Accordingly, and having regard to a spate of façade painting over first rate Victorian brickwork, we arranged a delegation to see Robert Angus, Head of Development Control (Development seems to mean Planning in Richmond speak) with Lucy Thatcher, a Senior Planning Officer. Our proposition was that whilst the traditional, mainly eighteenth century, core of the town had obtained comprehensive and high levels of protection, the same could not be said of the Victorian part, that the Victorian had now been accepted as taking its place in history (as indeed had the inter-war construction of the better grade) and that it might be time to revise, and consolidate, the protections – possibly even under Article 4 directions – for a much wider area than was currently the case.

Mr Angus listened attentively and let it be known that he would rely on us to make more specific recommendations on that score, for submission to the Council, so that the matter could be taken further if it was felt the case was warranted. Accordingly the committee has undertaken a street by street analysis of the area bordered by Paradise Road, Church Road and Hill Rise within a view to listing and prioritising streets and buildings which it feels fall with that category.

Overall we had the impression that the Planning Department appreciated the feed-back which it received from the Richmond Society and that the comments made, being properly weighed and argued, were a service to it rather than an irritation or a hindrance.

Important changes in planning law and practise are under review in the form of the Local Development Framework, the Killian/Pretty Review and Town & Country Planning, and it has been difficult to keep up with all the implications. Whilst, for once, there does seem to have been opportunity for genuine consultation one wonders quite how seriously the input will be taken and, as to the relaxation of a number of requirements for planning consent – specifically relating to lofts, basements, drives, rear extensions and micro generating equipment – one is suspicious that in order to save a good deal of money the local authorities are abrogating their responsibilities and allowing a in a plethora of highly detrimental wild cat alterations without control.

The committee makes a point of keeping out of private arguments or joining with specific schemes. However in the case of Wick House it was felt that the importance of the scheme was such that what appeared to be a unique opportunity should not be allowed to be buried by pre-conceived Council policy, and therefore supported the architects in their project to a highly pleasing successful outcome.

More recently we have supported the conversion of 22 The Green to its original use as a residential house. Having regard to the failure to promote the building for retention as offices over some two years and finding no developer prepared to carry out the very extensive works necessary to bring it up to modern day statutory requirements the committee decided that yet another Squat on the Green over a point of principle (in fact it is Council policy to allow return to residential in this part) was unsustainable and have written in support.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Neil Maybin

Three infrastructure issues have dominated the past year: Heathrow expansion, the effect of Airtrack on traffic, and the proposal by the Royal Parks to charge for parking in Richmond Park.

The Richmond Heathrow Campaign (RHC) acts as the focus for the Richmond Society, Friends of Richmond Green and the Kew Society in our opposition to Heathrow expansion and noise. Its members are Neil Maybin, Ian Bruce, Michael Glazebrook, Peter Griffiths, Karineh Grigorian, Gareth Harper and Peter Willan.

The RHC aims to encourage visible public opposition to the proposals for Heathrow expansion, influence individuals and organisations who in turn may be able to influence the Government's decisions on Heathrow, and campaign on Heathrow-related issues specific to Richmond. In the past year we have been active in all these areas: at the end of 2008 we held a successful rally on Richmond Green addressed by local MPs and peers; in March we brought together all the lawyers involved in opposing Heathrow expansion for a conference; and at the end of the Summer our response to BAA on their noise plan for Heathrow is likely to have material influence.

We successfully campaigned for the Conservatives to include a no expansion pledge in their manifesto. Notwithstanding the Government's approval of the third runway in January we believe we contributed, along with other campaigners, to BAA's decision to defer the planning application until after the election.

While not ignoring the possibility that expansion proposals will resurface, we are resetting our objectives and deploying the arguments against expansion to ongoing issues of excessive noise, pollution and night flights. Also, there is concern by residents that somehow flight paths have been changing and through Freedom of Information requests and other sources we are reviewing the situation.

Airtrack is the proposal to create direct links to Heathrow Terminal 5 from Reading, Guildford and Waterloo via Reading. While welcoming the increased amenity of the service we have shared local concern that decreased level-crossing 'up time' will result in greater traffic congestion, particularly at Manor Road. In September we objected to the granting of a Traffic and Works Acts Order to Airtrack in the absence of traffic modelling and mitigation actions for the Richmond level crossings. BAA have now agreed to review their proposals with a view to presenting amendments early in 2010.

Proposals made in January to charge for car parking in Richmond Park met with strong opposition locally. The Richmond Society responded to these in April. We do not support the introduction of parking charges in Richmond Park on the basis proposed. Indeed, the consultation did not adequately explain why charging might be necessary and did not provide a basis to set charge levels and establish conditions. A decision on these proposals is expected from the Royal Parks minister early in 2010.

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 £9,821. This is £1,926 less than last year which is principally due to lower interest rates, and hence lower interest income, and lower income from our events programme. The Society's finances are not immune from the general economic circumstances. 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 £11,216. This is £3,371 above last year which is primarily due to expenditure of £4,300 on the Town Sign project this year, offsetting lower expenditure on the events programme. Other running costs increased this year primarily due to the write off of fixed assets retired from use.
- Overall the Society recorded a deficit for the year of £1,395 which was financed from reserves (2007/08: surplus of £3,902). The principal reason for the deficit was the planned expenditure on the Town Sign project.

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

Patricia Spaight

Secretary

16 November 2009

The Richmond Society

Statement of financial activities for the year ended 30 September 2009

	2009	2008
	£	£
Incoming resources		
<i>From generated funds</i>		
Subscription income	3,693	3,964
Donations	1,901	2,111
Events	2,560	3,142
Interest income	924	2,153
<i>From charitable activities</i>		
Publications	178	215
Walks & meetings	565	162
Total incoming resources	<u>9,821</u>	<u>11,747</u>
Resources expended		
<i>Cost of generating funds</i>		
Events	2,447	2,757
Other fund-raising costs	-	-
<i>Cost of charitable activities</i>		
Trees & landscaping	-	630
Town Sign project	4,300	-
Newsletters	2,073	2,049
Public meetings	266	303
Subscriptions	65	251
Printing, reports & postage	327	557
Other running costs	1,618	1,186
Governance costs	<u>120</u>	<u>112</u>
Total resources expended	<u>11,216</u>	<u>7,845</u>
Net incoming (outgoing) resources before transfers	<u>(1,395)</u>	<u>3,902</u>
Transfers between funds	-	-
Net movement of funds for the year	<u>(1,395)</u>	<u>3,902</u>
Opening fund balances	<u>30,008</u>	<u>26,106</u>
Closing fund balances	<u>28,613</u>	<u>30,008</u>

Balance sheet at 30 September 2009

	2009	2008
	£	£
Fixed assets		
Display stands & projector	790	332
Current assets		
Stock of awards plaques	784	784
Debtors & prepayments	840	929
Deposit account	37,253	39,678
Cash at bank and in hand	739	560
	<u>39,616</u>	<u>41,951</u>
Current liabilities: amounts falling due within 1 year		
Creditors & accruals	9,517	10,293
Deferred income from life subscriptions	302	349
	<u>9,819</u>	<u>10,642</u>
Net current assets	29,797	31,309
Total assets less current liabilities	<u>30,587</u>	<u>31,641</u>
Liabilities and charges due after more than one year		
Deferred income from life subscriptions	1,974	1,633
Net assets	<u>28,613</u>	<u>30,008</u>
Funds		
General	23,716	22,052
Project	-	3,628
Landscaping & Trees	4,897	4,328
	<u>28,613</u>	<u>30,008</u>

Approved by the Executive Committee
on 16 November 2009

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 16 November 2009 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)