



## No. 20 Spring 2009

**W**elcome to the latest edition of our newsletter. As usual, it opens with the chairman's update on ongoing matters of interest. But this issue departs from normal practice in a couple of ways. Two shorter articles – Digging Deep and Broadway to Bush – appear as extended captions to pictures. Two other articles – Not Forgotten and Planned Chaos? – are of unusual length. The first is about the vexed question of how best to 'record' buildings before they are demolished. The second looks at the issues surrounding the new permitted development rules. We are very grateful to our in-house experts Michael Bussell and Tom Ryland for their lucid and readable presentations of what in essence are quite technical subjects and we hope you enjoy reading these and all the other articles in this our twentieth newsletter.

### Chairman's Update

#### The first HBG plaque

For some time the Group has been working with the borough's design and conservation team to establish a design for an HBG blue plaque. On 20 November 2008 the deputy mayor, Councillor Alex Karmel, unveiled the first HBG plaque on St Vincent's care home in Queen Caroline Street. We hope this will be the first of a series of plaques round the borough and that people will enjoy finding out more about buildings they pass every day.

There are many buildings in the borough with an interesting history and a number are being altered as new uses are found for them or, like St Vincent's, demolished and rebuilt with improved facilities. In such situations the Group always asks for three things: that the old building is properly recorded and photographs given to the borough archives (for an expert review of building recording see Michael Bussell's article on page 3); that any original details like foundation stones are saved and included in the new development; and that a plaque is erected on the new building to record its history. At St Vincent's, the old foundation stone is incorporated on the front of the building and now, just above it, there is a plaque commemorating its long history of caring for people in the neighbourhood.

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#### New Listings

The Group is delighted that Cremorne Railway Bridge, also known as Battersea Railway Bridge, has recently been listed Grade II\* (see page 6) and that Hammersmith Bridge has been upgraded to Grade II\*. As we go to press we have learned that St Andrew's Church, Fulham Fields (actually in Star Road), designed by Newman and Billing in 1873-4

and enlarged in 1894-6 by Aston Webb, has been listed Grade II. There had been a proposal to demolish part of the church and replace it with an attached block of flats. A full report will appear in the next newsletter.



*The Group's first plaque, designed in consultation with the council and unveiled on St Vincent's care home in Queen Caroline Street W6, on 20 November 2008.*

### Pre-application consultations

New development plans continue to come forward despite the financial downturn and there have been a number of pre-application consultations – some well organised at reasonable notice and some not. The Group takes these seriously and responds in detail. It remains to be seen how much developers are willing to listen and amend their proposals and how much such exercises are mere box-ticking. If pre-application consultations are to be respected and groups are to continue to spend the considerable time and energy on them that is required, then we need to see that our views have been taken into account when the planning application goes in.

### Imperial Wharf Phase 3

Recently, developers St George held a pre-application exhibition of its new ideas for Imperial Wharf Phase 3 covering part of the old Imperial gasworks site. Confusingly, the latest part of the scheme is re-named 'Chelsea Creek' – presumably for marketing reasons. We welcome the proposal to re-open and restore the old gasworks dock (part of which has been filled in) and to re-establish the link under the railway viaduct to the tidal area of Chelsea Creek as suggested in the *Chelsea Creek Project*. We welcome the proposals for reinforcement of the green corridor along the railway line with landscaped open space and for new pedestrian links.

However, we strongly oppose the inclusion in the development of a 39-storey tower, 128m high. In 2005 the Group objected to the 25 and 37-storey towers in the nearby Lots Road scheme and the inspector recommended refusal of the scheme because the 37-storey tower in particular 'would appear unduly tall and overbearing in views from the river and from the Lots Road triangle'. (Regrettably, the secretary of state overruled his inspector for other policy reasons – see Newsletter 14 – but the towers have not yet been built.) The proposed 39-storey tower will be equally overbearing on the riverside and the surrounding area.

### The TA site and the Fulham Palace moat

A planning application which includes a large Tesco supermarket, housing and a new church hall for All Saints church has now been submitted for the Territorial Army site in Fulham High Street. The developers have virtually ignored pre-application comments. The Group is vigorously opposing this application as, in order to include a large underground car park for the supermarket, the proposal is to build on part of the Fulham Palace land owned by the church which is within the ancient monument of Fulham Palace. If the proposal went ahead, it would destroy part of the route of the moat that surrounded the palace until infilling in the 1920s. The TA pavilions in Fulham High Street, which are Buildings of Merit, would be virtually demolished and their facades 'pasted' onto the front of a glass wall. In addition, the setting of the listed Temperance pub would be damaged.

### Whiteley's Cottages

Good news here – the application for demolition has been withdrawn. We hope that these splendid cottages, part of

the largest surviving Victorian warehouse complex in west London, will now be renovated.



*Whiteley's Cottages, viewed from the pavement on the north side of Talgarth Road, just west of the bridge over the West London Railway line. Built in the last decade of the 19th century, they formed part of the Whiteley's Depository and laundry buildings complex designed by Alfred M Rudge and probably served as stables and living quarters.*

### OPEN SPACE

#### Parks and open space strategy

As reported in the last newsletter, the Group has welcomed the borough's *Draft Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2008-2018* and the higher priority to be given to our parks and open spaces. There is a hierarchy of guidance for open space. Local policy has to 'cascade down' from national policy laid out in the *Planning Policy Guidance on Open Space* (PPG17), the London Plan policies with their supporting guidance and best practice guides, and the current UDP (which will, under the new planning regime, transform itself into the Local Development Framework).

The strategy which will eventually become part of our LDF speaks of 'protecting and improving' our parks and open spaces, 'raising standards of open space management and maintenance' and encouraging Friends groups. However, we are concerned that there is not enough emphasis on the historic nature of many of our parks. Most of the borough's parks are within a conservation area and some have a very old history indeed. Ravenscourt Park, for example, goes back to the 14th century when it was part of the estate of Alice Perrers, Edward III's mistress. Some still have much of their original Victorian layout and detail, for example Bishop's Park and South Park, and some are almost as designed, for example Furnivall Gardens, designed for the 1951 Festival of Britain and lacking only its floral clock. It is important that when masterplans are drawn up for improvements to a park, its historic design is used as a starting point for any landscaping proposals. We also consider that the Thames and the Grand Union Canal should have more emphasis. Both are not only in conservation areas but also of London-wide importance for nature conservation.

We welcome the support for Friends groups in the strategy. We already have some established groups: for

example, the Friends of Margravine Cemetery, the Friends of Bishop's Park and the Friends of Wormwood Scrubs. New groups are being formed for South Park and Ravenscourt Park and we hope more will follow.

The borough is short of open space so how we look after our existing open spaces is of particular importance. We hope that this new strategy of working with Friends groups will improve our existing parks. However, it is of concern that development after development is being approved without an appropriate amount of private amenity space or provision of new public open space. The argument is always used that the new residents 'can use the nearby park'. We hope that the council, in fulfilling its aim for more homes, will not store up problems for the future. The council should ensure that there is always adequate open space provided in every new development.

### **The Wooded Tow Path in Barnes.**

The tree survey commissioned by the PLA of all the trees along the tow path from Putney to Kew is now complete along with a draft tree management plan. The report is very thorough and acknowledges the heritage value of this landscape particularly noting the 'veteran trees', the 'skyline trees' and the rare native black poplars. A number of diseased or unsafe trees are being felled this spring. Over a period of some five years, others will be pollarded or coppiced and some will have their crown raised to improve views, but a most welcome part of the management plan are the proposals for tree planting.

### **Shepherd's Bush**

We understand that the planning application for the renewal of the landscaping of Shepherd's Bush Green is about to be finalised. We continue to be concerned at the lack of landscaping round the new Shepherd's Bush Central line station and in the Westfield development. At the moment the area round the entrance to Westfield from the Uxbridge Road is a concrete desert dominated by giant advertisement hoardings – a sad replacement for the original White City Arch. The Holland Park roundabout, currently boarded off, adds to the air of desolation at the eastern end of Shepherd's Bush. Much of the work on the common will be negated unless the council insists on proper landscaping in and around Westfield. Shepherd's Bush Green is not living up to its name at the moment.

### **Fulham Palace**

Phase 2 of the restoration and revival of Fulham Palace is a step closer to being realised with in-principle support being pledged by the Heritage Lottery Fund. The work will include the restoration and re-use of the walled garden, vinery, potting sheds, stables and Gothic Lodge which sits beside the entrance gate. It will also involve restoring a short section of the infilled moat.

### **GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN**

However much we may care about existing buildings, it is inevitable that many will eventually be replaced or substantially modified, for one reason or another. They can 'wear out', especially if not built to last; their original

function may become obsolete (think of the town gasworks or the railway horse stables, for example); or changing needs or expectations will require more or less drastic remodelling. Despite this, there has since the 1970s been a welcome broadening of interest in the adaptive retention of worthwhile buildings rather than their dogmatic replacement 'just because they are old'. Pressure and encouragement from groups such as ours play an important role in this, as do other issues favouring the re-use of existing buildings, notably the argument for sustainable development.

It is good that many buildings can be economically repaired, restored, or adapted to new uses or needs, but altering them will itself inevitably change their character and appearance. As an illustration, many 19th century London riverside and dock warehouses have been converted for residential use in recent decades. Typical changes such as the replacement of loading doors and small timber-framed windows by balconies and plate-glass picture windows will have had a dramatic impact on their external appearance. Less obvious to the passer-by, but equally significant in their effect on the interior of such a building, will have been the insertion of lifts and staircases and other necessary functional alterations.

So what can be done to retain evidence of a building as it was before the wrecking ball or the builders move in? The answer is *recording*. This will provide documentary evidence of the building that can be studied now and in the future. The term 'preservation by record' is used in conservation circles, as is 'mitigation of loss', to acknowledge that recording of a building before demolition or alteration is infinitely preferable to no recording at all.



*The HBG has been instrumental in the recording of various buildings since soon after its foundation in 1987. For example, the White City Arch (above) was fully recorded with scale drawings and photographs prior to demolition in 2003 (the recording in this case was a condition of planning permission as requested by the Group). At the CAV complex in Acton we made a photographic record before demolition. All records are now in the care of the borough archives.*



### Why bother?

Motives for recording range from purely personal interest to providing source material for the study of our built heritage. Immediately relevant fields of study are:

- local history – documenting how the buildings in an area have changed, for example the Fulham Reach riverside, which in my time has been transformed from a busy industrial zone into a residential area with both an arts centre and a noted restaurant, unimaginable in the 1950s;
- social history – for example studying and comparing the dwellings erected by 19th century philanthropic bodies, local councils, and commercial developers;
- industrial archaeology – an almost limitless subject embracing the physical evidence of the last two centuries or so, of which factories, warehouses, transport, and public utilities are among the more obvious examples; these are also the types of buildings that have been most often demolished or altered as the nature of industry has changed in the last few decades.

Other fields include architectural, engineering and construction history.



*The old Manbré & Garton sugar factory on the riverside where the Hammersmith Embankment office park is now being built. This is a good example of an historic industrial building that was NOT recorded before its demolition (in the 1970s).*

### Who does the recording?

In the past, building recording often depended on the initiative and voluntary efforts of interested individuals or

groups, just as it did for archaeological investigations. This commonly involved weekend or evening visits negotiated with the building owner. Nowadays, however, with increasing recognition that both below-ground and above-ground evidence once lost unrecorded can never be recovered, there is a more formal approach to building recording as part of the planning process, particularly in respect of listed buildings.

An important Planning Policy Guidance Note, PPG15: *Planning and the Historic Environment* (1994, document 1), set out government policy on planning issues, and provided quite detailed guidance to local authorities and others (see page 12 for background on PPGs). It is well worth studying. Building recording is addressed specifically in sections 3.22-3.24, mainly in the context of the demolition or alteration of listed buildings, although recording can of course be undertaken on unlisted buildings too. (As an aside, PPG16: *Archaeology and Planning* (1990, document 2) provided similar guidance on ‘pure’ archaeological matters, mainly concerned with what might lie in the ground. )

More recently, historic buildings and archaeology have been seen more as complementary aspects of the overall historical picture, and ‘building archaeology’ is coming into wider use to describe building recording and subsequent analysis, acknowledging that what stands above the ground is deserving of the same standards of investigation and recording as has long been the case for ‘dirt’ archaeology which gathers evidence from the ground, mainly by excavation. A draft Heritage Protection Bill, intended to harmonise the currently-disparate legal coverage of the various facets of the man-made heritage – listed buildings, conservation areas, ancient monuments, historic landscapes and archaeology – was published in 2008 (document 3), but this has yet to be considered for enactment.

In 1994, PPG15 (section 3.22) noted that the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England was to be informed of all proposals to demolish listed buildings, and to be allowed access if it wished to carry out recording before demolition. The RCHME was subsequently absorbed within English Heritage. In practice, limited resources make it unlikely that this body will exercise this right for any but a modest number of listed buildings.

Section 3.23 of PPG15 urged local planning authorities to consider imposing a condition requiring building recording to be undertaken by applicants seeking consent to demolish or alter a listed building. This was recognised by the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers in its very useful guide *Analysis and recording for the conservation and control of works to historic buildings* (1997, document 4). The title of this rightly emphasised that historic buildings need to be both recorded and then analysed, so as to identify and understand their important characteristics and features. The guide included a model form of wording that could be included as a condition to be satisfied, requiring ‘the

implementation of an appropriate programme of building recording and analysis' to be undertaken by an acceptable specialist, working to an agreed written brief and specification' (Appendix C).

This requirement has been adopted in the important recent English Heritage publication *Understanding Historic Buildings: Policy and Guidance for Local Planning Authorities* (2008, document 5) which explains, more fully than I have space for here, when and how a recording condition may be attached to a listed building or conservation area consent, or a planning permission. In my experience, such a condition is being quite frequently applied.

The 2008 English Heritage guidance to local planning authorities indicates further that a recording condition could equally be applied to an unlisted building – and, indeed, other 'historic assets' including 'where appropriate, not only individual buildings, but complexes, sites and wider areas'. Indeed, an example is reported of just such a condition being applied and implemented for an unlisted watermill.

It appears implicit that such recording is to be paid for by the applicant seeking the demolition or alteration. And the recording may be required to document the building before work starts, and also as it proceeds, when a watching brief will allow recording of previously-concealed features as they are exposed.

Despite this encouraging indication that unlisted buildings and other 'historic assets' might also qualify for recording as a condition of works being carried out, there is still scope for interested individuals and groups to carry out recording, particularly of less obviously 'attractive' but still interesting unlisted properties facing demolition or alteration. This will of course require the permission of the property owner and/or occupier, and due care will be needed to ensure safe and healthy working, especially in unoccupied and/or derelict buildings. And in such circumstances, how much recording can be done – if any, beyond a few photographs – will depend on the importance of the building, the timescale for the work, and the resources (mainly the time of volunteers) available to do it!

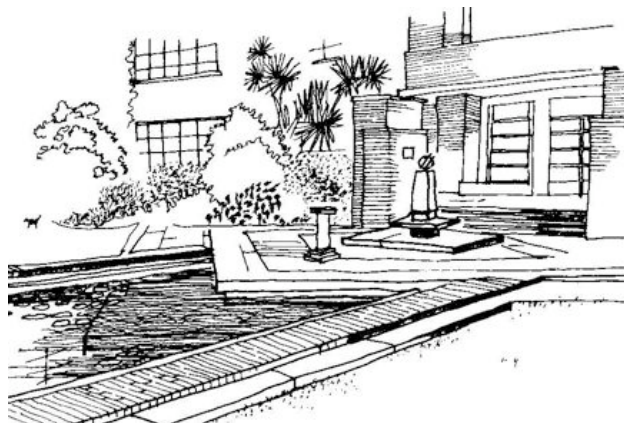
### **The approach to recording**

Whether it is carried out by professionals or volunteers, recording will typically involve some or all of:

- investigation – developing an understanding of what is there
- survey leading to drawings
- photography
- documentary research
- written report

For 'formal' recording as discussed above – and of equal use for the volunteer recorder – the current key reference source in my opinion is the English Heritage publication *Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good*

*recording practice* (2006, document 7). This supersedes an earlier RCHME publication, and takes account of the recent developments in electronic survey techniques and data handling, and the advent of the digital camera. (This is not, incidentally, to denigrate the traditional methods of hand survey by tape, pencil and paper, nor the use of 35 mm or larger-format film photography – all of which are still valuable skills and tools, and more accessible to 'amateur' recorders than the electronic scanning and distance measurement instruments, the associated data processing, and the digital Hasselblad!)



### **DIGGING DEEP**

*Designed by Burnet, Tait and Lorne in 1933, the Ravenscourt Park Hospital, formerly the Royal Masonic, is listed Grade II and is perhaps worthy of star rating in view of its interiors. It is undoubtedly the most important Modern Movement building in the borough. The south garden shown here is typical of the period with its long lily pond, bird bath, armillary sphere sundial on a pedestal, diagonal lines of brick and concrete flag paving, all surrounded by flat areas of grass. As part of the development plan for the hospital, the garden is to be temporarily removed to make room for new radiography accommodation below ground level. It will then be reconstructed over the top, substantially as it exists at present but without the later planting. There is no start date set for the project. The wonderful cantilevered balconies which overlook this calm haven were illustrated in Newsletter 14.*

The English Heritage recording practice guide will repay detailed study by anyone interested in recording. Here I will just summarise its approach to levels of recording, of which it identifies four. The choice of level will depend mainly on the significance of the building and what is proposed for it. Clearly, the higher the level of recording then the more resources and time will be needed.

For each level the guide suggests typical components in terms of drawings, photography, and a written account:

- Level 1 – basic visual record, typically for identification of the building in a wider study: sketch plan/elevation; photo(s) of general view of building exterior; note of building's location, whether listed etc, date and name of recorder, brief note on building function, materials, etc
- Level 2 – descriptive record (more detailed version of Level 1): as 1 plus possibly some measured plans/elevations/details; photos of all external

elevations and principal interiors; more detailed notes on building's form, uses, dating, development

- Level 3 – analytical record (more comprehensive study of the building in itself); as 2 plus more detailed drawings, including possible reconstruction and phasing drawings; fuller photography of building including details, equipment, fittings, etc; fuller written account including copies of historical records and references
- Level 4 – comprehensive analytical record: as Level 3 but with extended discussion of the building's historical significance (architectural, social, economic, regional)

The guide also identifies as a separate possibility making a *photographic survey*, typically of a building of a common, well-documented type that is proposed for demolition or alteration. It may also be made of a building under no threat, to provide an archival photographic record. This type of survey involves no drawings, and only Level 1 written information.

The English Heritage guide includes guidance on preserving the record once it has been made – drawing particular attention to the need to ensure that digitally-recorded information is monitored, to ensure that it remains accessible as data storage media are successively rendered obsolete and the hardware needed to read them disappears. Guidance is also provided on architectural drawing conventions, and some very useful sample drawings are included. These show that anyone with basic draughting experience ought to be able to produce good quality drawings.

Equally, on-site recording work is essentially within the grasp of anyone who can knock out a rough sketch, hold a measuring tape, or take a reasonably sharp photograph.

Once the recording has been done and compiled into a report, however simple, it should be offered to a public archive where it can be available to others. In our borough, the Archives and Local History Centre is the obvious place. The English Heritage National Monuments Record in Swindon may also be approached. And a summary of the report could appear in this newsletter.

Michael Bussell

#### **About the author**

Michael Bussell is a structural engineer who has spent most of the last ten years working on schemes involving historic buildings in the King's Cross/St Pancras area. These include the restoration of St Pancras Station and its former hotel, King's Cross mainline and underground stations, and the very large King's Cross Central regeneration scheme centred on the former railway goods yard north of the Regent's Canal. Earlier, he helped to found the Greater London Industrial Archaeology Society and was involved in recording work at Fulham Pottery, Fulham Reach, and the former White City refuse destructor site off Wood Lane. He would like to stress that although he works with historic buildings he

is not a historic buildings lawyer, and so his interpretation of government and other guidance is his personal opinion.

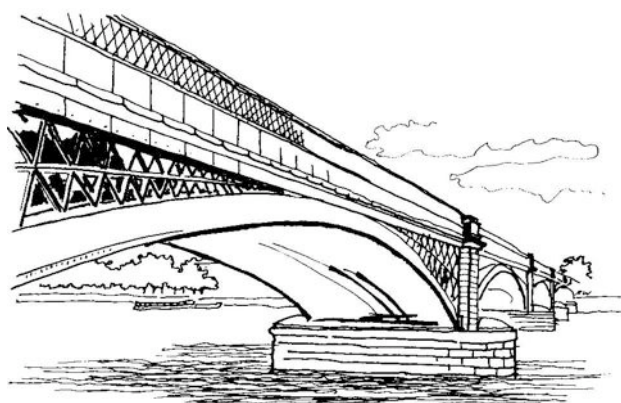
#### **About the documents referred to in the text**

Printed copies of all documents referred to in Michael Bussell's article except No. 4 are available from either the Stationery Office or English Heritage. Alternatively, all documents including No. 4 can be downloaded from the internet. You can obtain the addresses by the visiting the HBG website ([www.hfhhbg.org.uk](http://www.hfhhbg.org.uk)) and downloading 'Michael Bussell Article References' from the Downloads page.

#### **STAR BRIDGE**

The Cremorne railway bridge (alternatively known as Battersea railway bridge) is the largest structure on the West London railway connecting Willesden Junction with Clapham Junction. It dates from 1863 when the line was extended across the river to Clapham. Historically, the line has been mainly used for freight, although passenger services have been reintroduced and are scheduled to increase when the new Imperial Wharf station opens.

Designed by William Baker, chief engineer of the London and North Western Railway, the five-arch bridge resembles the old Southwark Road bridge produced by John Rennie in 1819. In particular, the diagonal bracing of the spandrels follows the Rennie design. But whereas old Southwark Bridge was made of cast iron, Cremorne Bridge is wrought iron. Wrought iron is stronger than cast iron, and anyway, by 1863, cast iron had been discontinued for railway bridges following a number of failures. Countersinking of the bolt heads on the Cremorne Bridge increases the appearance of a cast iron bridge, which, of course, would not have had rivets. Baker's design thus appears to be a deliberate, and respectful, copy of the work of Rennie, a major engineer.



Cremorne (sometimes known as Battersea) Railway Bridge, built in 1863 across the Thames and recently listed Grade II\*.

Thanks partly to the open work in the spandrels and at the top of the parapet, Cremorne Bridge has a light, open feel and excellent detailing, visible especially in the stone piers and abutments and the way these connect with the ironwork. When the riverside was industrial it was



difficult to see all this, but now that both riverbanks have been pedestrianised, it is possible to get up close to admire the bridge's undoubted qualities. It is, in short, a fine piece of engineering and at the end of 2008 was listed Grade II\*.

*John Goodier, Historic Buildings Group*

## PROJECT PALAIS

*Richard Weller produced last year's TV documentary on Hammersmith Palais. The HBG Newsletter asked him for his reflections on the project.*

When I was asked by Waddell Media to produce a documentary about the Hammersmith Palais I knew the building by legend only. I was brought up near Reading and I would often come up to Hammersmith for gigs, but by that time – the mid 80s – the Palais had been turned into a nightclub and my haunt was the Clarendon Hotel.

As soon as we started researching the subject and talking to people, it quickly became obvious that this was a building deeply loved by many generations of people. From security guards across the road to celebrity music fans like Phil Jupitus, it seemed everyone had a story about the Palais and a profound affection for the place. We put up a request on the BBC 4 website for people to share their stories and we were inundated. You normally get only a couple of responses from things like that, but we got hundreds from people across all the generations. It's a shame we only had time to feature a few.



*The Hammersmith Palais pictured in 1969 when it was celebrating its golden jubilee. By this time it had been in the hands of the Mecca organisation for some nine years and was increasingly being used as a venue for live concerts..*

Making the programme was a joy. It is not often you get a chance to meet Dame Vera Lynn and Mick Jones from The Clash in the same day and both remembered the Palais in completely different ways. For Dame Vera it was another glittering venue where she would steel her nerves for a live radio performance before rushing home to the East End to ask her mum how she had done. For Mick Jones it was the setting for The Clash's triumphant return from the States: a wall of fans just yards away from the band and an atmosphere he found hard to describe.

As a fan of punk and ska, I began with an interest in the Palais going not much further back than 1970. But what really struck me was hearing the stories from the swing period. It must have been an amazing place to be when the likes of Ted Heath were kicking up a storm. Some of the colourful stories Ross McManus told of his time with the Joe Loss Orchestra were also fascinating. He said you had to be very careful with the girls as you didn't want a visit from an angry husband just out of the Scrubs!

It was also incredible sifting through some of the old archive film and photos – and there was a lot. Travelling to the Palais to do interviews and then watching the same place come alive from the 20s or during the Second World War was like stepping into a time machine. A real heart stopping moment was seeing 87-year-old dancer Lyndon Wainwright take to the floor again. He had to be helped onto a barstool to do the interview, but when he was back on the floor he glided around like he was 20. Everyone who came in to the Palais to do interviews was visibly moved to be in the venue again. I am sure I saw tears in Dennis Bovell's eyes. It was amazing the effect it had.

A building is more than bricks and mortar and more than architectural features. It has a soul and you felt it as soon as you walked in to the place. I think it's a desperate shame that the Palais has gone and I feel honoured that I was allowed to help say goodbye. To paraphrase the words of the general manager, Matt Talbot, people need to take a good look around because pieces of living history are disappearing under our noses and we need to fight to keep them.

*Richard Weller*

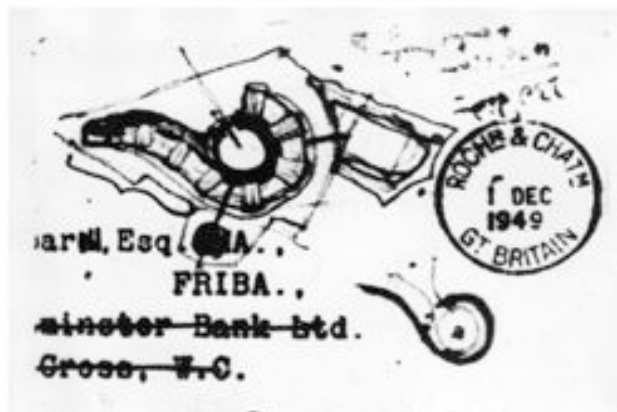
## THE GROUP'S ANNUAL MEETING

The Group's annual meeting for 2008 was held on 9 October at the BBC White City conference centre in Wood Lane and had as its theme 'The White City, Past, Present and Future'. The BBC complex stands on land which originally formed part of the White City exhibition grounds. These were first used for the Franco-British Exhibition of 1908. In the same year, a stadium was hastily added to the exhibition grounds for that year's Olympic games and the main BBC building, including the conference centre, actually stands on the stadium site.

Before the meeting there were guided tours of the adjacent Media Centre and external areas where the finishing line of the 1908 marathon is marked out on a pedestrianised street and the final medals table is displayed on an adjacent building. There was also a fascinating exhibition about the Olympic games and the 1908 exhibition, kindly provided by borough archivist Jane Kimber. Group committee member Keith Whitehouse showed members the original ceremonial spade used to inaugurate the building work in 1908.

Our host for the evening, Andrew Fullerton, head of environmental planning at the BBC, gave a presentation about the creation of the BBC TV Centre and showed many interesting images from the BBC archives,

including the architect Graham Dawbarn's original sketch of the building drawn on the front of an envelope (*see illustration below*). We were told that 11,700 people currently work for the BBC in the White City area, and that although this will reduce to 7,000 by 2012, the BBC remains committed to the area and is working in partnership with other landowners and the council to promote White City as a new creative quarter for London. The chairman said how pleased the Group was that the TV Centre had been recommended for listing by English Heritage as it considered the TV Centre and its use a key part of the character of the local conservation area.'



*Architect Graham Dawbarn's initial ideas for the floor plan of the new BBC television centre at White City, as sketched by him in a pub on the front of an envelope posted in 1949.*

Jon Whitwell, standing in for the leader, Councillor Stephen Greenhalgh, said that the council was working with the BBC and other landowners towards the regeneration of the White City Opportunity Area (WCOA). The Council intended to revise the 2004 Development Framework partly in the light of the work on the master plan. The new WCOA Framework would be prepared as part of the overall Local Development Framework for the borough and there would be public consultation on both in 2009.

A number of other issues were raised at the meeting, including new permitted development rules and gravestones treatment. Articles exploring these subjects in more depth appear on page 9.

The meeting ended with a charming message of congratulation from Mike Plumbe, the Group's former honorary secretary, on the Group's 21st anniversary.

*Angela Dixon, Historic Buildings Group*

## DOWN UNDER

If you know central Hammersmith, you will probably be familiar with Cambridge Grove and Leamore Street. These are the two roads running north from King Street which dip in the middle to allow traffic to pass underneath the District and Piccadilly lines. If you have walked along these roads, you will probably also be aware that the pavements themselves do not dip. They maintain their level course, supported by brick retaining walls complete with handsome stone cappings, steps and

elegant railings (*see below*). Today, after many years of neglect and damage caused by wide vehicles, these picturesque features are suffering badly. Concerned residents have now come together to campaign for traffic restrictions and to secure funding for much-needed repairs.

Cambridge Grove began as an early 19th-century cul-de-sac off King Street. The rate books for 1847 refer to the location as Clarence Terrace, presumably named after the royal Duke of Clarence who became William IV in 1830. The residents recorded at the time were merchants, proprietors of small businesses, schoolmasters and middle managers – the sort of people who made up the backbone of early Victorian society. The cul-de-sac was subsequently developed into a through road at about the time of the Crimean War (1853-56). It was then renamed after another royal, the Duke of Cambridge, who was active in the war. The new pub at the intersection with Glenthorne Road was named after the duke too and the duke's arms were fixed to its Glenthorne Road façade (they are still there though the pub name has now changed to the Stonemasons Arms).

Cambridge Grove was probably excavated and the railings installed during construction of the London & South Western railway from Kensington to Richmond (precursor of the District line) in 1869. Local resident Michael Wright, an industrial archaeologist, describes the handsome railings with their steps and supporting structures as 'typical of the practice from the late 18th century to the early 20th century and...a handsome example of the workmanlike street furniture of the time'.

During World War II many railings in London were uprooted for the war effort, but those in Cambridge Grove and Leamore Street were spared. This was probably due to concern for pedestrians using the pavements during blackout. On 23 June 1944 a V1 flying bomb landed on the parapet of the railway bridge in Cambridge Grove, destroying the houses closest to the bridge and damaging many others beyond repair. Miraculously, the railings survived.



*Cambridge Grove in 1905 showing the railings bordering the pavements and the steep drop to the lowered carriageway.*

After the war much of the central area of Hammersmith was demolished to make way for the Ashcroft Square development. The demolition included the east side of Leamore Street, but the other side and Cambridge Grove



survived. Both streets looked run down and shabby at this time. Their decline is captured in the 1952 film *Cosh Boys* which featured Cambridge Grove as a location. The film, starring a young Joan Collins, portrays gang violence and delinquency in the dark alleys and bombsites of postwar London.

In the past ten years, the general streetscape of the area has improved as people have done up their houses. The railings and supporting walls, however, continue to be neglected. It's true that a section of the retaining wall at the northern end of the street which was on the point of collapse has recently been rebuilt. However, running repairs of this type will not halt the long-term deterioration. Encouragingly, the railings are earmarked for inclusion in the character statement for the Bradmore conservation area, but the problem is that the council has not provided funding for the substantial conservation work necessary to preserve this unique Hammersmith streetscape. The residents point to the major developments that are currently at the planning stage or underway in central Hammersmith and understandably ask, should the council not insist that developers contribute to the conservation of the historic fabric of the area through section 106 agreements?

*Ian Griffiths*

## GRAVE MATTERS

One of the questions raised at the Group's annual meeting in 2008 was the care of tombstones. A number of issues are involved: who looks after tombstones in Hammersmith & Fulham, how do they do it, and according to what policy? What follows is a brief account gleaned from my perspective as secretary of the friends of Margravine Cemetery in Margravine Road behind Charing Cross Hospital.

Many of the borough's tombstones lie within the four council-owned cemeteries. In Margravine Cemetery the vast majority of stones were laid under the turf in the mid



*The blackthorn, one of the trees to be found on the wooded tow path across the river from our borough.*

20th century to make the area more park-like. Of the remaining memorials, three are statutorily listed. These are subject to specific planning law and church rules. The rest, including a host of typical Victorian angels, are of less obvious artistic merit when viewed individually, yet many people express an appreciation of the 'feel' they give to the place. Collectively they provide good examples of popular Victorian styles.

Families are responsible for gravestones. The problem is they are often untraceable. Who then should be preserving the memorials? Safety is the biggest practical

concern for the council, as heavy stone tombstones can be dangerous. Hammersmith & Fulham council commissions a specialist firm to carry out testing in each council-owned cemetery at regular intervals on a rolling programme (having informed the church, the public and the families first). A 'topple-tester' is used, testing to a 35kg pressure. I have seen the testing process and it is done with care and precision. Stones in danger of collapse – not necessarily those that lean the most – are staked and the owners are requested to make their property safe. This can be a very costly business, possibly running into four figures for a very large monument. If there is no response, then it is the responsibility of the cemetery manager.

The council does not have a rigid policy, so discretion is used. If the gravestone is in reasonable condition and the inscription legible then it is made safe in a more permanent way by resetting it using resined cement. If the inscription is illegible and the stone is not in good condition, it is laid down flat facing upwards.

Margravine Cemetery has seen one recent episode of vandalism and one of theft. In both cases a photographic record would have helped – perhaps an amateur extension of the HBG-sponsored, borough-wide record carried out by John Sheppard and now available online through the council website. Friends groups and interested societies have their part to play in raising questions, in spreading knowledge and in watching over their cemeteries. In this way we can actively promote an interesting heritage, and bring about an informed appreciation of it. If you would like to know more, see the local government ombudsman's report on the subject at [www.lgo.org.uk/pdf/LGO-612-Special-Report-final.pdf](http://www.lgo.org.uk/pdf/LGO-612-Special-Report-final.pdf).

*Ruth Savery*

*Secretary, Friends of Margravine Cemetery*

## PLANNED CHAOS?

Planning legislation is becoming more complicated and more confusing by the day. Over the last few years, the government has introduced or threatened to introduce so much new legislation that the whole process is becoming a minefield, and often self-defeating. It is probably all well-intentioned, but the problem with something like planning is that when you have a several different sets of rules applying to the same area, unless all the thinking has been joined up, anomalies and loop holes are created. This may be a joy for developers (and their lawyers and advisers), but it is a nightmare for planning officials, and even worse for planning committees and groups such as ours, who frankly just do not have the time and expertise to go through – and interpret – every piece of new legislation.

An obvious example here is provided by the local planning rules. The town planning rules with which most of us are familiar were introduced after the Second World War. Up to about 2000, each local authority was obliged to produce a set of planning policies and standards. This document which had to be consulted upon and approved by a government inspector (to ensure compliance with

any national rules) was called initially the Local Plan, but from about 1992 the Unitary Development Plan (UDP). It was valid for five years. With the introduction of the mayor of London and the Greater London Authority, a whole new raft of legislation was introduced for the London boroughs. This legislation now takes precedence over the UDP.

Since then, several things have happened. Under the Town and Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order 2008, the mayor has been given sweeping powers actually to decide on large planning schemes instead of the local authority. The government decided to replace the well-established UDP format – just as most people had got to grips with it – with a completely new system called Local Development Frameworks. These have required so much organisation and consultation by each local authority that, although they were due to be in place by the end of 2007, in practice they are nowhere near ready. As a result, the UDPs have had to be botched up as a holding operation.

Add to this cocktail the change of ruling political party in our council and the mayoralty of London, and you have the perfect recipe for complete confusion. This has already resulted in far reaching changes to what is left of our UDP, and in the meantime the mayor has published his Draft Alterations to the London Plan.

It does not end here. The government for many years has issued supplementary planning guidance notes on a whole range of planning topics. They used to be called Planning Policy Guidance papers (PPGs), but they have been redefined as Planning Policy Supplements (PPSs – see note on page 12 for definition) and have been mostly rewritten. The government has consulted upon its proposed new heritage protection bill, dropped at the last minute from the most recent Queen's Speech. This would completely re-organise and reclassify the system of listed buildings, which would be replaced by the term 'historic asset' and would be designated and controlled largely by the local authority. It will also have implications for conservation area designation and control. Watch this space.

The new planning bill will allow the government to remove decision-making from local authorities on strategic matters such as airport expansion, additional runways, power stations and the like. There is also a White Paper called *Planning for a Sustainable Future*. The list goes on.

You will probably be thinking: but what about the pronouncements in autumn 2008 by the government and in the press implying that the planning rules, especially relating to domestic properties, were going to considerably relaxed. This would be achieved by increasing the 'permitted development rights'. So what is meant by permitted development? Permitted development relates to rights to extend properties and make alterations in certain circumstances without the need for planning permission. As these rules are conferred by Parliament,

they are items of 'statute', and therefore take precedence over any local planning rules that may be determined by a local council.

The new changes relate to a number of the classes of permitted development contained within the current statutory instrument, The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, including extensions to dwelling houses, roof alterations and outbuildings. They also apply to porches, TV aerials and satellite dishes, external pipes and front garden paving.



### **BROADWAY TO BUSH**

*The Osram Tower of 1920, now part of the Tesco building west of Shepherd's Bush Road, featured on an HBG guided walk on 18 October 2008 exploring the area between Hammersmith Broadway and Shepherd's Bush Green. The 15 or so walkers saw en route public buildings, churches, pubs, community gardens, schools, apartment blocks, industrial buildings and traces of the area's transport heritage (notably remains of the 'lost' Richmond-Olympia railway line which accounts for the conspicuous curve formed by Sulgrave Road, Minford Gardens and Sinclair Gardens). Walkers also learned about some of the achievements of the HBG, for example the saving of the Osram Tower and the retention of the integral signage on the Swan pub in Broadway. The walk was part of the HBG's events programme and we are grateful to Group committee members John Goodier and Keith Whitehouse for organising and leading it, and to Simon Coventry for this report on it.*

So is this all going to lead to anarchy? The short answer is actually no. If you are a householder wanting to be freed of the shackles of constraint and bureaucracy, then you will be very disappointed. If anything the rules are more complicated, if not actually stricter.

The permitted development rules for domestic properties have always related to houses in single occupation (not flats) and built prior to 1948, with certain provisos, and generally where they are not listed, in a conservation area, or national park or similar, the exception being a house previously divided into two flats, where approval is not required to join them back to one house. Virtually none of this has changed.

Members of the Group who on the whole want to see protection from unwelcome change to properties or areas of historic interest should be heartened by the new rules. There is for example no relaxation on the controls to listed buildings, where full planning approval and listed building consent for alterations and extensions are still required.

The old rules for extending a dwelling were generally based upon volume. This meant that, for example, a detached or semi-detached house could be extended at ground floor by up to 70 cubic metres or 15% of its original volume (or that at 1 July 1948) to a maximum of 115 cubic metres, whereas any house in a conservation area or any terrace could only be extended by 50 cubic metres or 10% of the original volume, whichever the greater. There was an overall height limit in all cases of four metres even at the boundary.

At upper and roof levels, there was no right for an extension to a house in a conservation area, whereas other houses could be extended within the volume limits noted above.

The new rules are much more prescriptive, dictating maximum widths, depths and heights of extensions. Now a ground floor extension cannot exceed three metres in height at the eaves if within two metres of the boundary. At roof level, there are lower volume allowances than previously, and there are restrictions on positioning of windows.

Although the changes barely affect properties in conservation areas, there are now some subtle changes. For example, there used to be a size limit on garden 'outbuildings' of 10 cubic metres, above which planning permission was required. This specific condition has been dropped, but there are other restrictions relating to height, its relationship to the main house and boundaries, and proportion of the total garden area covered.

The government consulted on the proposed changes last year. Little was then heard until the completed Bill was presented to Parliament in September 2008 and rushed into force on 1 October 2008. Predictably, this has been a disaster. The Bill is appallingly drafted, ill-considered and confused. Most local authorities were unprepared and

are dismayed by the lack of clarity. It is likely their workload will increase rather than decrease, which is the opposite of the intention. Lawyers are delighted by the potential increase in their work.

The Department for Communities and Local Government are being very unhelpful in providing guidance (their website has a diagram of a suburban detached house of a type not to be found in inner London), so that local authorities may have to mount challenges via judicial review. Being statute, neither a local council (nor the mayor of London) can override or control permitted development except as described below. Some local authorities are even considering adopting wholesale Article 4



*The common or street lime, one of the trees to be found on the wooded tow path across the river from our borough.*

directions, which allow a local authority to set aside permitted development in certain circumstances. These are intended where, for example, a property (or more usually a group of properties) are not listed, but have some distinctive characteristics (such as roof material, window or door design), where any uncontrolled change would be considered detrimental. An Article 4 direction, which must be endorsed by the secretary of state, is not a prevention of development in itself, but merely allows the local council the opportunity to require a planning application to be made. This will further slow down the process, and it is likely that widespread use of Article 4 directions will be overruled by the government. Many streets in Hammersmith and Fulham have the benefit of Article 4 protection. Check the status in your street now, and if you feel that your street needs this, why not campaign for it?

So what do you do if your neighbour announces their big plans or starts building without planning permission, telling you that it is all 'permitted development'? Well, if you are concerned, obviously you could seek professional advice but that can be expensive. Alternatively, you can raise the matter with the council. They should investigate whether the proposals are within permitted development or require planning approval. They will probably invite the building owner to submit an application either for full planning or a Certificate of Lawfulness, and do have the power of enforcement and ultimately prosecution if it proves the development is illegal. If the owners are sensible, they will have applied for a Certificate of Lawfulness anyway both to avoid such problems, and even if it is indeed permitted development, they will have a certificate if and when they sell the property on at a future date.

It is worth noting that in general terms any changes to the appearance of the fronts of properties (except porches outside conservation areas) are not covered by permitted



development and require planning consent. The same comment applies as above. If you are concerned that your neighbour is doing something which you feel is unacceptable, contact the council.

At present, the permitted development rules do not cover basements. Outside conservation areas, where there are controls in our borough (through supplementary planning guidance) in respect of front lightwells, there are NO rules in planning legislation covering the installation of basements. These are often the cause of much neighbourly conflict. The government is aware of this and has recently published a 'Supplementary Report: Basement Extensions Householder Development Consents Review.



*The elm, one of the trees to be found on the wooded tow path across the river from our borough.*

Implementation of Recommendations'. If made law, this is likely to allow permitted development for full basements under the footprint of any non-listed – sorry, not a Heritage Asset – property, but not garden, with a restriction that front lightwells must be subject to planning approval in conservation areas. No timetable has been announced for this legislation. Like most of the legislation referred to in this article, you can read the full information on the Government website – [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk).

Finally, among all this mayhem, there is one small item of positive news. It is now no longer permitted development to dig up and pave over a front garden unless the resulting scheme is in accordance with the principle of SUDS (Sustainable Urban Drainage System). This is particularly good for our borough where there have been many incidents of front gardens being destroyed and increasing problems of basement flooding caused by the inability of the sewer system to cope with the additional loads.

*Tom Ryland, Historic Buildings Group and director of Chartered Practice Architects Ltd*

*Editor's note: Tom Ryland has also contributed the following note on PPGs and PPSs for our enlightenment.*

#### **PPGs and PPSs – what are they?**

Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs) and their replacements, Planning Policy Statements (PPSs), are prepared by the government after public consultation to explain statutory provisions and provide guidance to local authorities and others on planning policy and the operation of the planning system. They also explain the relationship between planning policies and other policies which have an important bearing on issues of development and land use. Local authorities must take their contents into account in preparing their development plan documents. The guidance may also be relevant to decisions on individual planning applications and appeals.

## **HGB EVENTS**

### **Saturday 9 May: Fulham Moat walk**

Explore the route of Fulham Palace's former moat, the borough's only scheduled ancient monument. Led by local expert Keith Whitehouse. Meet 11am at main entrance to Fulham Palace in Bishop's Avenue. Lasts 2 hours approx. Cost £5, pay on the day. Booking required: Richard Scott – 020 8749 3963 or [rbc.scott@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:rbc.scott@yahoo.co.uk)

### **Tuesday 19 May: Wormwood Scrubs walk**

Walk round Wormwood Scrubs and Little Wormwood Scrubs to hear about their history and see the work being done on the nature reserve. Led by Paul Clay, the Scrubs nature conservation officer. Lasts 2 hours approx. Cost £5, pay on the day. Booking required: John Goodier – 020 7160 4739 or [fsslibrary@btconnect.com](mailto:fsslibrary@btconnect.com)

### **Thursday 18 June: Brompton Cemetery tour**

Meet at cemetery chapel at 2pm for 2.30pm start (tea and coffee available). Entrances on both Fulham Road (200-yard walk to chapel) and Old Brompton Road (600-yard walk to chapel, both along main avenue). Lasts approx 2 hours. Cost £5, pay on the day. Booking required: Richard Scott – 020 8749 3963 or [rbc.scott@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:rbc.scott@yahoo.co.uk)

### **Sunday 28 June: HBG Treasure Hunt**

This year our annual treasure hunt is in Parson's Green. All welcome. Great prizes. Trail takes approx 2 hours. Pick up your entry form from outside White Horse pub on Parson's Green any time between 10am and 3pm. Entry per team (up to 4 adults plus children) £10 on day or £7 in advance (for advance booking send cheque payable to H&FHBG to HBG Treasurer, Jo Brock, Flat 12, 43 Peterborough Road, SW6 3BT, together with SAE). More info from Richard Scott – 020 8749 3963 or [rbc.scott@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:rbc.scott@yahoo.co.uk).

## **OTHER EVENTS**

13-14 Jun: Open Garden Squares

27 Jun-5 Jul: Fulham Festival

29 Jun-10 Jul: Performing Arts Week, Hammersmith

4 Jul: Parsons Green Fair

19-20 Sep: London Open House

## **HGB PUBLICATIONS**

*Local List* £17 members, £20 non-members.

*Bradmore House* illustrated booklet, £5.

Both available from Group chairman: 020 8748 7416

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